Labour Monthly

EDITED BY R. PALME DUTT

WILLIAM RUST

Jitter-Bugs and Confidence Tricksters

CECIL POOLE, M.P.

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Announcing . . .

We are glad to be able to announce that, following his recent illness, the Editor will resume his Notes of the Month in our April number.

The Guarantee Fund

Below is the latest position of the Guarantee Fund of the Labour Monthly.

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Jitter-Bugs and Confidence Tricksters

BY WILLIAM RUST

THE MEMBERS OF the Inner Cabinet are now busily telling the country that all is well, Britain is strong, its defences are in order and peace is guaranteed. Four months ago, at the time of Munich, they were saying exactly the opposite. They were then the Chiefs of the Jitter-bugs, who had ordered gas-masks for all and the digging of trenches in every public park. We are on the brink of war, they screamed, for which our weak defences are totally inadequate, let us accept the dictates of Hitler as the only way to peace.

There is no more justification for the confidence trick now being worked than there was for the artificial panic of September last. Both are deliberate creations of the National Government designed to gull the public and to put over a reactionary policy. Yesterday it was panic, to-day it is confidence, to-morrow it may be panic again. The members of the Inner Cabinet are learning the Fascist technique of propaganda, they are well versed in the ways of deceiving the people and in disguising the real meaning of their policy.

In point of fact the course of events since Munich give every reason for grave concern. The handing over of Czecho-Slovakia to Hitler has been followed by the Fascist military victory in Catalonia. Mussolini's demand that France give up Tunisia, Corsica, Nice and Jibuti is now stridently repeated and new threats are made against the small democratic states of Europe. Fascism has become more insolent and the international tension has increased. At home unemployment has passed the two million mark and the economic crisis is increasing. Emboldened by its strengthened military position Fascism has also become more threatening in the economic sphere. "Export or die" says Hitler in a speech announcing a trade war and renewing his demand for colonies. British exports, it should be remembered, were

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down by sixty million pounds last year.

Why then this sudden burst of confidence on the part of the former jitter-bugs? Principally because they want to quieten the people and to stop the spread of the disillusionment which followed Munich. They want to side track the opposition which has developed within their own Conservative ranks and to deceive the Labour movement that at long last a stand is going to be made against Fascism. They want to create confidence in their one thousand pound a minute rearmament programme and to prevent people from understanding that defence is not only a technical question but primarily a matter of policy. In short they want to create confidence in the National Government.

In this situation it is most important that the Labour movement should understand how to resist the alternate waves of panic and illusion and should fight for its policy with clarity and firmness. It must have confidence, but confidence in its own movement, confidence in the working-class and the forces of Democracy. If that kind of confidence existed the wailing note of defeatism based on the belief that Fascism is all-conquering would not be heard so often.

Fascism has certainly gained considerable strength as a result of the so-called "appeasement" policy, but so far it has only been able to wage war as a result of the direct aid given by Britain and France. It is true that Mussolini won an unaided victory over primitive Abyssinia and that Hitler swallowed up little Austria but he dared not fight armed Czecho-Slovakia and obtained his victory there only because the Anglo-French threat was added to his own. And in Spain the Fascist conquest of Catalonia, achieved after thirty-two months of heroic Republican resistance, has only been possible because the policy of non-intervention blockaded and starved the Republic.

The central fact of the present situation is that Fascism derives its strength not from its own powers and resources but from the support accorded to it by Chamberlain and Daladier. Democracy is still stronger than Fascism, stronger in resources, spirit and courage. Remove the paralysing grip of Chamberlain and Daladier, unite democratic Britain and France with the

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might of the Soviet Union and the new wave of democratic feeling now sweeping America and the death knell of Fascism would be sounded. Fascism fears the people, it fears the Italian and German people amongst whom there are now new signs of independent activity.

But although Fascism is as yet too weak to fight a large scale war there is no concealing the fact that the scales are beginning to turn in its favour. If Spain were to fall to Fascism there would result a re-balancing of the forces in Europe which could enhance the might of Fascism to an extent not yet appreciated in this country, although there are certain indications that the real meaning of the struggle is beginning to be understood even by circles outside of the working-class movement. Misgivings are expressed in the most unexpected quarters :

> "Non-intervention led directly to the defeat of the Spanish Government," wrote the *Daily Express* on February 15. "It was, in fact, intervention on the side of Franco. . . . No doubt many of our readers will rejoice at the victory of Franco. But the *Daily Express* does not share their enthusiasm. We have no rejoicings at the course of events in Spain."

The *Daily Express* is expressing popular opinion and also the misgivings of the capitalist interests it represents, interests that feel that it is not only Spanish democracy but also the power of Britain that is being sapped away on the strategic peninsular of Europe. Even the reactionary Economic League, the propaganda organisation of the large employers, publishes in its first leaflet for 1939 the following gloomy foreboding :

> It may well be that before the year 1939 has come to an end the future of the British Empire will have been decided. The issue is perfectly clear. It lies between the British peoples at home and overseas becoming an even greater force in the defence of democracy, or alternatively, the steady disintegration of Europe and the decline of Britain to the status of a fifth-rate power.

But none of the bourgeois publicists have written with the same insight as Liddell Hart, the military expert, who stated in a recent pamphlet that :

> People who talk of preventing another war are at least two years out of date—in the deeper sense. The second great war of the twentieth century began in July, 1936.

Liddell Hart has made in his own way a summing-up of the present world situation which corresponds with the estimation

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contained in the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, namely, "that a second imperialist war has actually begun." But this famous book continues the analysis still further:

> A distinguishing feature of the second imperialist war is that so far it is being waged and extended by the aggressor powers, while the other powers, the "democratic" powers, against whom in fact the war is being directed, pretend that it does not concern them, wash their hands of it, draw back, boast of their love of peace, scold the fascist aggressors, and . . . . surrender their positions to the aggressors bit by bit, at the same time asserting that they are preparing to resist.
>
> The second imperialist war which has so "imperceptibly" stolen upon the nations and has involved over five hundred million people, is bound all the more to represent a most serious danger to all nations, and to the U.S.S.R. in the first place.

This Marxist-Leninist summing-up of the situation is, of course, in marked contrast to the vagueness and unclarity of the bewildered bourgeois. The conclusion of the Economic League is the necessity for National Service. The policy of the *Daily Express* is support for the National Government. Even Liddell Hart pins his faith to more and more armaments. And Duff Cooper, who resigned from the Cabinet as a protest against Munich, deceives himself into believing that the same Chamberlain who sold out at Munich intends now to snatch a victory from Hitler and Mussolini in Spain.

The bewilderment of the bourgeois who finds his own Government pursuing a policy of national betrayal and the incoherence of the Conservative opposition when outmanœuvred by their Party leaders is understandable. All the more so when it is remembered that the leaders of the Labour Party have persistently refused to stretch out a friendly hand to those masses of voters who have hitherto backed the National Government but who are now groping for an alternative policy in their search for peace and security. But is it not a fact that similar bewilderment shows itself in the leadership of the Labour Party itself?

Last September the leaders of the Labour Party were the first to succumb to the bites of the jitter-bugs. To-day they are the first victims of the confidence tricksters and they fall over themselves to announce that Chamberlain is now stiffening his attitude towards Fascism. Some of them even

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whisper that as Chamberlain is prepared to fight Fascism it is better to have a strong Conservative Government in power than a democratic or Labour Government which might prove weak and divided. The National Council of Labour officially supports National Service on the grounds that the Government is taking measures to protect the people of this country against Fascism.

There is no greater danger to-day than these illusions regarding the rôle of the Chamberlain Government. Chamberlain will certainly have a thieves' quarrel with Hitler and Mussolini over the body of Franco, but his first and primary concern is to help them to crush the Spanish Republic and to undermine the Popular Front in France. Chamberlain will certainly argue and juggle over British colonies and markets but he will readily strengthen Fascism by giving away the markets and colonies of other countries. To talk of Chamberlain standing up to Fascism at the very moment when he is encouraging Fascism's next decisive move—the encirclement of France—is patent nonsense. To talk of Chamberlain standing up to Fascism when he is actually preparing the machinery of Fascism in Britain itself is to put the working-class movement off its guard at the very moment when it should be up and doing in defence of its democratic liberties.

The basic reason for this pro-Fascist policy of Chamberlain is tersely explained in the *History of the C.P.S.U.*, which points out that although the democratic states fear the Fascist aggressors " they fear even more the working-class movement in Europe and the movement of national emancipation in Asia, and regard Fascism as an ' excellent antidote ' to these ' dangerous ' movements." This analysis has a very pointed application to Britain where Chamberlain is most uncomfortably aware of the might of the organised working-class and the bitter struggles that are threatening now that the hardships of a worsening economic situation are added to the anxieties of the war menace.

Certain events already presage the coming storm; three million trade unionists are considering what to do now that their wage demands have been rejected, the unemployed are stirring again and have already aroused wide public sympathy,

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a great struggle against high rents has already begun in a number of large towns. On the other hand Capital is preparing to throw down the gauntlet. The railway companies screaming " Square Deal " campaign was not so much against the road transport monopolies, with whom they have already made a truce, as an attempt to justify the rejection of the rail unions demand for wage increases and a fifty shilling minimum. Capital everywhere is demanding a " Square Deal " at the expense of the workers. There is to be no increase of the income tax to meet the burden of the bloated armaments programme, but a huge loan is to be floated the interest on which will have to be borne by the people now and by future generations. There is no taxation of the arms profiteers, but the demand of the engineering workers for higher wages is blankly refused. Social services are being eaten into at a time when, if one in every five of the children of prosperous Bristol are undernourished (Colston Survey), the conditions in the depressed areas and the poverty-stricken textile towns of Lancashire must be ten times worse.

In this situation the new struggle over policy which has broken out in the Labour Party must be viewed not as an isolated case of Cripps versus the Executive Committee, but rather as an expression of the new strirings now taking place in the Labour movement. Cripps' service is that he has not shirked the responsibility of squarely challenging the Executive of the Labour Party, he has bluntly stated the issues and has given a lead to the entire movement.

What is that lead ? Put in a nutshell, it is that the issue to-day is Chamberlainism versus the People. The job of the Labour movement is to take the lead in uniting the masses who are alarmed by the policy of Chamberlain and who want a real policy of defence against poverty, war and Fascism. And the first practical step in that direction is to unite the opposition by the achieving of an electoral agreement which will prevent parliamentary seats from being handed over to Chamberlain when a majority of the electorate is actually against him.

The lead is so clear, the necessity so obvious and the possibilities of achievement so clearly practical that Cripps has met with a tumultuous reception in all of his crowded meetings

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and his petition is being signed by hundreds of thousands. Moreover, Cripps has succeeded in combining this compaign with intense personal efforts to strengthen the Labour Party. The spectacle of an expelled member of the Labour Party recruiting over one thousand new members in the course of a couple of weeks shows how deeply Cripps' stand corresponds to the unity strivings of the workers. It is very doubtful if those members of the Executive who voted for the expulsion of Cripps have recruited even a fraction of that number since they were elected sixteen months ago. Perhaps Morrison, who doubts the value of the results obtained by Cripps, would like to enter into competition with him.

If the Executive of the Labour Party had permitted the membership to discuss, freely and untrammelled, all of these issues of the present situation there would have resulted a clarification of views which would have strengthened the Party even if it had not brought complete agreement. But all possibilities of a free discussion have been prejudiced by the abrupt expulsion of Cripps and the threat of expulsion now hanging over the heads of other militants. Moreover, the Executive has embarked upon a shamefully demagogic campaign of propaganda designed only to confuse and mislead.

Transport House announces that it cannot take the lead in uniting the opposition forces because the Labour Party stands for Socialism. Therefore in the name of Socialism it decides (a) not to turn out Chamberlain (b) to turn out one of its best known Socialist propagandists. If this was only a sign of an academic hair-splitting it would indeed be a bad enough situation. But unfortunately it is hair-splitting that leads in practice to an alliance with just those forces that are most viciously opposed to Socialism.

History has repeatedly shown that those who are addicted to left phrase-mongering often turn out to be completely on the right and even end up in the camp of counter-revolution. And in this connection it is interesting to note that Lenin waged a constant fight against the tactical position of the Social-Democratic parties which contended that the struggle for Socialism was the affair of the working-class alone. One of the basic new ideas with which Lenin enriched Marxism

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was the conception of " an *indispensable* factor of the Socialist revolution, namely, an *alliance* of the proletariat with the semi-proletarian elements of town and country as a *condition* for the victory of the proletarian revolution." (*History of the C.P.S.U.*).

The reality behind the seemingly " advanced " stand of the Social-Democratic parties was the desire to postpone the struggle for Socialism indefinitely. It was necessary to wait for another hundred years or so until economic conditions were ripe for the fruits of Socialism to fall into the hands of the workers. Meanwhile these parties did not exist in a social vacuum, as political parties they had to take part in current politics but having rejected a line which would lead the workers forward to Socialism they inevitably fell into the only alternative, co-operation with capitalism. In 1914 they swung round in support of the imperialist war and in 1917 they fought the Socialist revolution in Russia and lined up with Tsardom and capitalism.

And so with the leaders of the Labour Party to-day. Faced with the fact that millions of people, outside of the Labour movement, are turning from their old political allegiances and seeking new advanced policies they declare that they can have nothing to do with these masses unless they accept here and now the policy of the Labour Party. And if these millions still hesitate to take such a step so much the worse for them. Let Chamberlain have them all rather than permit the virgin " Socialism " of the Labour Party to be sullied by the touch of one unclean non-Socialist democrat. In fact, we leaders of the Labour Party will expel from our own ranks anybody who dares to occupy himself or herself with the problem of co-operating with these people. In the name of Socialism the leadership of the Labour Party rejects all ideas and proposals (*e.g.*, working out of an electoral agreement, attempt to find a common immediate programme, etc.) whereby a great political change could be facilitated in this country and millions of people brought into association with the working-class movement if not yet directly into it.

Is this a policy that leads to Socialism ? No, and the leaders know it quite well. It is the policy that leads to Chamberlain-ism. Because once you reject a line of policy which leads to a

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majority against Chamberlain, once Socialism becomes a dream of the distant future and Chamberlainism the accepted immovable reality of to-day, co-operation with Chamberlain becomes the only practical politics. And this is what is actually taking place.

The alternative of Transport House to a People's Alliance against Chamberlain is not Socialism but an alliance with Chamberlain. The real Socialists are those who are advocating unity and are fighting Chamberlain.

Tear aside the facade of spurious Socialism and look at the realities. Support to the Government's armaments plans and National Service preparations for conscription, no steps to unite the struggle of three million trade unionists for higher wages, virtual outlawing of the unemployed organisations, rejection of united action on behalf of Spain after supporting non-intervention in the first decisive year. Does this policy lead to Socialism ? But a Labour Government will take decisive measures we are told. But if you read the speeches of the Labour leaders and the watered down Immediate Programme you will find that they propose not to do more but even *less* than the advocates of unity are demanding from a popular democratic government. But the real point is not who will do more but that a popular democratic government is immediately realisable through the fight for unity while a Labour Government to be achieved by the rejection of unity and by patiently waiting for a miracle to happen at a General Election is nothing but an electoral phantasy.

At this moment when the fate of Spain is hanging in the balance, when the air is thick with Fascist threats against France, when the country is rumbling with a revolt against the deadening poverty which is ruining the lives of millions, this is no time to read hoary tracts to the workers. The fight for Socialism to-day is the fight to bring millions of people into action against Chamberlain, the fight to hound him and his gang out of public life. The fight for Socialism to-day is the fight against the widespread distress and insecurity which exists in this rich land of Britain. The fight for Socialism to-day is the fight to unite and strengthen the forces of the Labour and trade union movement, the building up of the

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Communist Party and its affiliation to the Labour Party.

Against the National Government which is now endeavouring to whoop up confidence in itself the Labour movement must array the united forces of the people. No confidence in Chamberlain, confidence only in the working-class and the forces of democracy.

Read

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Who is for Liberty?

BY CECIL POOLE, M.P.

I BELIEVE THAT Liberty and Democracy will persist in this country just so long as the great mass of the people show that they desire such an order to prevail, and are prepared to make some little effort to safeguard these things which most of us deem so vital. If this be true, then all those who are giving real thought to the present position must be gravely perturbed by the great apathy manifested by the man in the street. Although we have seen grow up, in recent years, a multiplicity of organisations, each of which has endeavoured to awaken interest in their own particular objective, and though more written propaganda has been poured out than ever before in our history, still we find no great interest manifested by many people in the real affairs of the day.

The crisis of September last alone served to make men and women think, but it was then too late for thought to avail in a practical way. Must our Democracy run right up to a similar crisis, and arrive at a point when the thoughts of men will accomplish nothing, before we can bring home to our fellows the urgency of the present position? I believe that such will be the case, unless, by a complete change of tactics, we can arouse the latent enthusiasm of those who to-day will have nothing to do with ordinary party politics.

I feel confident, moreover, that unless certain things are done, and done quickly, there is no earthly hope of defeating the National Government at the next election. Give Mr. Chamberlain and his colleagues a further term of office, and leave the bulk of the people still to pursue their "don't care" attitude, and we shall have given the mandate, which will be so welcome to this government, to curtail or take away the rights and liberties so hardly won by our forefathers. It is because I feel that the next election is vital, and moreover will be the last that we shall have as a free democratic people, unless we defeat this pro-Fascist government, that I subscribe to the policy of uniting all those who are desirous of preserving democracy, in a common front against the National Government.

Those who oppose us allege that we are being false to our Socialist faith, or even say that we never had any! But is Socialism the immediate issue of the day? I venture to suggest that it is not. To be an idealist in our inherent faith in the belief that the ills of the world will find no solution unless and until they find it in the application of a Socialist order of Society, should not prevent us from being realists in the circumstances prevailing at the moment. First things must always come first—if they do not do so, then the second and third things will just not happen.

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The first need of the day is to make abundantly certain that we have adequately safeguarded the means whereby we may accomplish our Socialism, and this will not be done unless this Government is defeated at the next election. The tactics of warfare, military or otherwise, do not vary as time goes on. Two things are pre-eminently necessary in the waging of a successful struggle. First, know the strength of your opponent, and secondly be not unmindful of any weaknesses which exist in your own forces. I cannot believe that the leaders of the Labour Movement do not appreciate the enormous strength of the National Government with all its supporting ramifications in the financial and industrial life of the country. I do feel they do not sufficiently realise that our strength in attack is not as powerful as it might be, or as it must be if we are to be successful.

We have to face the facts that, although every effort has been made, there has not been attracted within our movement, even a small proportion of those millions of unattached voters who can decide the fate of the next election. They have remained outside for various reasons, some because of old prejudices, others because they are distrustful and suspicious of us. Dare we leave this floating electorate who care little for the party struggle, or even for Socialism for that matter, to be caught up by some clever electioneering catch-word of the Tory Party ? Many of them are in constituencies where, although they have opposed the National candidate they have known from the commencement that there was no earthly chance of defeating him, and that the result was a foregone conclusion. Consequently the poll has been abnormally low, because of lack of interest. In striking contrast was the by-election at Bridgwater. It was not because Vernon Bartlett was the candidate that more than 80 per cent. of the electorate recorded their votes, but because for the first time those who were against the policy of the National Government saw an opportunity, by a united effort, of defeating the Government candidate.

It is this same spirit which is causing the campaign of Sir Stafford Cripps to receive such an enthusiastic welcome throughout the country. His Manchester meeting at the Free Trade Hall, at which I was privileged to speak, must surely be unique in the history of the City; never have I seen greater enthusiasm and fighting spirit in an audience than was there evident. Moreover, nearly 500 new members for the Labour Party were obtained after an appeal that had to be brief owing to the shortness of time available. And this, mark you, by a movement which its opponents say will spread disruption in the Party !

Those who oppose unity profess grave doubts as to the sincerity of any Liberals who might associate with us, and point to the evidence of 1931. It is, in my opinion, because of our experience of 1931, that it is highly desirable that we should endeavour to get some positive declaration from the Liberal Party before an election. Should the

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Labour Party gain at the General Election 100 additional seats, a fairly high estimate in my opinion, the Liberals would again hold the balance of power. In such circumstances, is it not extremely desirable that we should have them previously pledged to support a definite programme, rather than again to take office dependent on their day to day support, and fearful always that they might fail us when we needed them most. It is useless to talk of making a deal with them when the election is over, and we see we need them. The master cards will then all be in their hands. It is, I feel, far preferable that they should now be invited to put their hands to a definite policy, such as the six-point programme formulated in Sir Stafford's Petition, for we shall then know just how far they are prepared to accompany us along our legislative path. Let us recall those six points :

> We British citizens, looking out on a world threatened as never before by war and Fascism, call upon the Parties of progress to act together and at once for the sake of peace and civilisation.
>
> We ask for a Government that will :
>
> 1. Defend democracy, protect our democratic rights and liberties against attack at home and from abroad.
> 2. Plan for plenty, multiply the wealth of the nation by employing the unemployed on useful work; increase old age pensions, ensure a higher standard of life, education and leisure for old and young.
> 3. Secure our Britain, organise a Peace Alliance with France and Russia that will rally the support of the United States and every other peace-loving nation, and end the shameful policy which makes us accomplices in the betrayal of the Spanish and Chinese people to Fascist aggression.
> 4. Protect the people's interest, control armaments and the vital industries, agriculture, transport, mining and finance.
> 5. Defend the people, provide effective protection for the common people against air attack and starvation in the event of war.
> 6. Build for peace and justice, end the exploitation of subject races and lay the foundations of a lasting peace through equality of opportunity for all nations.

Is there not here such a fullness of possibility that any Party might be proud of having accomplished such a programme in the life of a single Parliament ? Could any Labour Government hope to do more than this in such a time, even if given a clear majority ? Everyone realises that the Petition Campaign programme does not embody the whole of our Socialist plan, but none of us ever visualised the fulfilling of such a plan during the life of a single Parliament.

The more I ponder over the problem, the more I am convinced that if the Labour Movement really believes that Democracy and Freedom are not safe in the hands of the present Government, and really desires to provide an alternative government, then it must not refuse the help of those outside the Movement, who are willing to be associated with it in its task. I wish, however, that I were perfectly sure, beyond a shadow of doubt, that all our leaders really did desire to provide an alternative government. Some I know, though undoubtedly a small

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minority, feel that with such an uncertain foreign situation, so desperate an industrial problem at home, and along with both a colossal financial burden to be handled, it is preferable to leave the National Government to extricate itself from the muddle it has created. I do not believe this view is widely held, but it is nevertheless to be found in the Party, and shows a tragic lack of understanding on the part of those who share it.

The challenge to Democracy has come in Germany, Italy, Austria and Spain, and in each case democracy has been overwhelmed and has ceased to exist. The challenge to our own position here is very near. There is no special dispensation of Providence which decrees that we, for all time, shall have these things preserved for us. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance, and there are millions who, whilst prepared to watch and work with us for its preservation, do not, as yet, find themselves able to wholly embrace our faith. This movement of ours, faces a difficult and dangerous journey in the months that lie ahead; will we deny ourselves comradeship and help on the loneliest part of the journey, because those who proffer it will not as yet agree to travel with us the whole of the way?

God forbid that we should ever have to defend our liberty as our brave comrades in Spain have striven so heroically to do, but if such a need ever does arise (and it is more than a remote possibility) shall we refuse to play our part because the next man on the barricades has belonged to the Liberal Party or to no party at all? The idea is preposterous; why therefore should we, whilst there is yet time to avoid the necessity of the barricades, not accept the help of all those who will help to defeat reaction at the next election? You may tell me as some have done, that such suggestions must cause such men as Keir Hardie to turn in their graves, but if our united efforts save this country from being engulfed by Fascism, or plunged into a ghastly war, then I believe the means will have justified the end.

Candour is a commendable quality in an individual, and it will be equally commendable if it is now found in the Labour Movement. It is not defeatism to realise one's own limitations, nor cowardly to accept help to defend that which is most prized in life, and I appeal for realism and candour in the situation which confronts our movement at the moment.

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Hitler and Colonies

BY R. F. ANDREWS

ONE OF THE most monstrous features of the international situation in recent years has been the aid granted to Hitler and the aggressor axis, free gratis and for nothing—and always with the best intentions—by certain progressive elements in Great Britain, particularly by Labour leaders. What makes it particularly monstrous is that they show no signs of learning from their all too ample experience.

The Labour leaders denounced arrangements between countries, members of the League, to grant each other mutual assistance against an aggressor, within the provisions of the League Covenant, as " old-fashioned alliances " and " encirclement of Germany "—just in the years (1934-35) when such pacts would have effectively discouraged Fascist aggression, and the National Government was therefore pouring cold water on them. Afterwards, of course, people become wiser —but it was too late.

They supported " non-intervention " in Spain during the first 12 months of the war (1936-37) on all kinds of grounds (" the advantage would have lain with the rebels," " we dared not risk a war," " it would have been difficult to persuade public opinion," " the U.S.S.R. has accepted non-intervention," etc.)—just at the time when Chamberlain, Hitler and Mussolini were enabling the rebels to consolidate themselves, making up for lack of popular support by a wealth of armaments. Afterwards, the Labour leaders changed their policy—but too late to bring an end to Fascist intervention.

They refused to " take sides " in the conflict between Henlein and the Czechoslovak Government for many months, refusing to recognise that it was in reality a conflict between aggressive Germany, supported by Chamberlain, and another small state defending its democracy and independence. The story of their " good luck ! " wishes to Chamberlain, in the final stages, is notorious. But now that it is too late, the Labour leaders are full of wisdom about Czechoslovakia.

To-day there is a new danger—that, in the new phase of Hitler's imperialist war to re-divide the world, the phase in which he is demanding colonies, some progressives will once again do his work for him, and only change their policy when it is too late.

The *Daily Herald* prints an article by Mr. George Lansbury calling upon Britain, Russia and the U.S.A. to declare, in reply to the German demand for colonies, that they are " willing to become co-operators in the task of sharing territories, resources and markets for the good of all." In 1937 the leader of the Labour Party, Mr. Attlee, had already explained (*The Labour Party in Perspective*) that Great Britain should

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extend the League of Nations mandates system to its own possessions, with a view to establishing " international control of raw materials," and even " an international civil service all over the world. . . .inspired by a common ideal : the raising of the standard of life and culture of the less advanced races." So also the *Star* (February 2, 1939) suggests an international conference " for the better government of Africa," and the establishment there of a system of joint control by several nations, which " should not only satisfy the demand for equality and a common share in resources, but ought to do a great deal for the development of Africa "—of course, as a " stepping-stone to African self-government." And even Sir Stafford Cripps has proposed, where colonies are not given immediate self-government, that " the interests of the native people and of the peoples of the world in the products of the territories could be guarded by a truly international administration by the group of countries that were prepared to take part in the scheme " —which would be administered by " an international civil service " and be subject to " a planning committee " (*Left News*, November, 1938).

It may seem something of an anti-climax, but it is none the less necessary, to point out that a similar scheme has been put forward by the *Times*. It is hardly reasonable that the international control of raw materials through a condominium or joint board should, at one and the same time, be a step to colonial emancipation and acceptable to the principal mouthpiece of reactionary British finance-capital. Yet the *Times* editorial on November 16, 1938, did actually propose (1) the establishment of an International Bureau of the Powers concerned, in which " Germany might well find an honourable place " (to administer the territories of colonial peoples) (2) the elimination by this Bureau of " economic barriers between them and between Europeans trading with them " (3) the regulation of native production by the Bureau " on a common system." Needless to say, the scheme would be purely one of " trusteeship "—holy word—but there was the comforting reflection that this might last " for centuries to come."

Before considering whether any scheme for internationalising colonies would really justify the support of progressive elements in Great Britain, let us not forget why and how the demand for colonies is being put forward by certain Powers.

Ample evidence has already been published to show that it is not *shortage* of raw materials, nor yet excess of population, that prompts the demand for colonies. There is no obstacle to Germany securing raw materials on the world markets, particularly during these years of permanent agrarian crisis.* Nor can Italy or Japan complain in this respect. In any case, as the League Committee on Raw Materials

*James Turner, in his illuminating little booklet *Hitler and the Empire* (Lawrence and Wishart, 6d.), shows—after considering textiles, non-ferrous metals, aluminium, iron ore, rubber and petroleum—that Germany's raw material supplies " were unquestionably higher in 1935-36 than in 1929."

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pointed out in 1937 (*Report*, p. 10): "Most raw materials are produced wholly, or to a great extent, in sovereign countries. In fact, the raw materials which are typically colonial. . . .number only three, viz., palm oil, rubber and copra. . . . A fourth product is found in abundance, but not exclusively, in the colonies, viz., tin. . . . The total present production of all commercially important raw materials in all colonial territories is no more than about three per cent. of world production." As for excess of population, the total of 25,000 Germans resident in the pre-war German colonies in 1914 (out of 13 millions), after thirty years of occupation, and of 500,000 Japanese in Manchuria (out of 34 millions), after a similar period, is a sufficient reply. The large military garrisons settled under the guise of "colonists" by Italy in Libya (25,000) and by Japan in the South Sea Islands (50,000) cannot alter this reply.

It is a different story when we turn to the question of *monopoly*—whether of raw materials, or of sources of cheap labour, or of other fields of investment (in Government-financed public works, railways, etc.). For here we come up against the political significance of Hitler's demand for the return of the former German colonies. Only £50 millions out of Germany's £1,200 millions invested abroad in 1913 were in her colonies: but £530 millions were in South-Eastern Europe (Austria, Hungary, Turkey, Serbia, Roumania), where German political influence had followed economic penetration, and in semi-colonial countries—China, Argentina and Chile. Another £200 millions were in the most backward of the European Powers—Russia and Spain. Even in 1914, German imperialism thought it worth while to fight a great war for the re-division of the world in such a fashion as to bring these and other fields of investment (Berlin-Bagdad-India) more firmly within its monopolist grip, were it successful. How much more it feels the need to-day, with only £230 millions of investments abroad, one need only read Hitler's and Goebbel's speeches to understand. And the restoration of the German colonies in Africa and the Far East, given the German alliance with Italy and Japan, given the immensely increased power of aviation and fast commerce raiders, means providing Germany with a valuable unit of the machinery Hitler requires to launch a new war for the re-division of the world.

In order to find economic justification for the political and military adventure already begun by the aggressor axis—in China, Spain and Abyssinia—it is not necessary to prove that *all* the capitalists, still less all the people, of the aggressor countries gain direct pecuniary benefit. The direct interests of the decisive capitalist groups are quite sufficient—the iron and steel manufacturers, the railway and war material manufacturers, the bankers looking for more productive loans—and one need only look at the annual tables of share yields, published by the *Economist*, to see the advantage of colonial monopoly to such groups. But in addition, as a writer in the *Financial News* recently reminded us

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(February 13), experience has proved " that it is possible even in modern times to make colonies pay almost from the very outset, provided that the coloniser is not unduly particular about his methods." Of course, German plundering in Spain, Italian in Abyssinia and Japanese in Manchukuo have plenty of precedents in the British methods of primitive accumulation in India, Africa and China, or in the French and Belgian methods in the Congo. All that is necessary is to work out a theory (and practise it) that " the sole *raison d'être* of native sub-men is to provide for the requirements and comfort of Nordic super-men."

So long as German capitalism was still staggering under the effects of the last unsuccessful world war, such considerations remained academic. But by 1929 this was no longer the case : Germany economically had become one of the leading Powers. She was first in Europe in the production of iron, steel, coal, aluminium, electric power, heavy chemicals and non-ferrous metals; in output of motor cars she was third in Europe, and in launchings of steam and motor vessels she was second. In short, Germany had all the equipment necessary to prepare her for entering the lists once again to challenge the older Empires. The world economic crisis was turned to profit by the German magnates of industry and finance, thanks to the divisions in the ranks of German labour : they were enabled to place in office a terrorist dictatorship, the Nazi Government. This smashed the workers' organisations as a preliminary to an immense increase in speed up, rationalisation and concentration of capital, rearmed and repudiated its foreign debts with impunity owing to the deepening of international and internal differences among the other great Powers, and actually began the re-division of the world by force of arms, either itself or in alliance with Japan and Italy. The latter had no far-reaching war defeats to make up, but were at one with Germany in supporting her plans for a war of revenge : because they, too, were intent upon re-dividing the world in their favour.

To imagine that this determined drive for re-fashioning the world map, supported by the vast technical might of the most industrially advanced capitalist State in Europe, and pursued with the merciless brutality which the Fascist régime has already displayed in abundance, can be exorcised, as it were, by offers of conciliation, round-table talks, economic co-operation in the distribution of raw materials, internationalising colonies under a League mandate, etc., is not only missing the point entirely, but also is storing up the most terrible and bloody disillusionment. German finance-capital (like any other) wants colonial territory, whether overseas or in Europe, for its own exclusive exploitation. It has been building up a huge striking force, at immense cost and perhaps even a fatal risk to itself, because it knows that no Empire will willingly give up its own territories for that purpose, still less will any State voluntarily abandon its independence. Conciliation by minor concessions—" appeasement," as it is now known—not only whets Hitler's appetite, but affords him new points of departure, new ground

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occupied and consolidated, to serve as jumping-off points for new demands. If breaking the backbone of the threat to his rear in Europe, by handing over to him the fortifications of Czechoslovakia, encouraged Hitler and his allies, how much more would they not demand were a serious threat to the rear of the British Empire created, by handing over colonies to Germany? Yet it is just such a threat which is concealed behind the fanciful talk about "internationalising the colonies."

In the first place, such talk, were it seriously taken up by the British Labour movement, would at once have the effect of finally and irreparably alienating the colonial peoples, the natural allies whom British Labour should seek for the common struggle. For you could not persuade the colonial peoples that to be exploited by an international "consortium" or "condominium" or "board of trustees for the native races" would be preferable to exploitation by one State, however lofty the principles proclaimed or enlightened the "international civil service." On the contrary, they would see in an alliance of imperialist States a more formidable enemy than one Empire: and British Labour would have thrown in its lot with that alliance. Talk about League mandates would not hide that fact: League mandate is but old colony "writ large," as any report by a Mandatory Power to the League will show.

To alienate the colonial peoples means to open the gate wide to German and Italian intrigues, of the kind already witnessed in Tunis and Syria.

Secondly, British Imperialism has no intention whatsoever of parting with its colonies voluntarily, whether to Hitler directly or to an "international pool." It would make the world swim through blood first, whatever its kindly feelings for Hitler. All the champions of "appeasement" have drawn this distinction between their own colonies and those of other States, and there is no reason to doubt them. There is the experience of India and Egypt, Irak and Palestine—not to speak of Ireland—to show it. British Imperialism is British finance-capital, and it knows why it wants colonies at least as well as Hitler. To feed the Labour movement upon day-dreams of "co-operating for the good of all in the colonial sphere," when its own vital interests demand co-operating with all and sundry to bring down the National Government as a protection against a new war, spells disaster—all the more if the morsel is sweetened by sugary self-delusion about "trusteeship for the natives."

And thirdly, Hitler and his allies might certainly join in some specific consortium to exploit particular colonies, which they could not get at by any other means. But, once again, it is the cruellest self-deception to imagine that this can satisfy them; because it ignores the very nature of the colonial problem. The reasons for this have been set out earlier: and they can be studied, much more satisfactorily, in Lenin's book on *Imperialism*.

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One thing is certain—that, after the self-deceptions about " encircling Germany," and " non-intervention in Spain," and not taking sides in Czechoslovakia, the British Labour movement can well do without self-deception which will leave it disarmed in face of Hitler's drive for colonies, just when it ought to be armed and active.

For there is a positive line of action for Labour—and it is *not* the line that some have flirted with, of saying to Chamberlain : " You have not defended Spain : very well, we shall not defend the colonies." No pacifist or pseudo-Socialist propaganda on earth will persuade the mass of the British people, should they learn of an ultimatum from Hitler involving the dismemberment of the British Empire in favour of Germany, or of a war in which German victory will lead directly to that result, from taking up arms. Their instinct will tell them that no positive advantage could be gained, either by themselves or by the peoples of the Empire, from the victory of the aggressor " Axis," whether by an enlargement of the wars it is now conducting, or by a " peaceful " surrender of Great Britain. On the contrary, bad as their lot is under British exploiters, under German exploiters it would be worse, just because German Imperialism is trying to make up for generations of laggard development.

Must we, then, fight for the Empire—for Neville Chamberlain and the Bank of England, for British planters and soap manufacturers, for the glory of " paternal " British Residents and their military colleagues—if Hitler attacks us ? Not in the least. Were the National Government, by its persistence in the class foreign policy of maintaining the aggressors in being, at the price of the lives and liberties of other peoples, and in the criminal hope of driving the Fascist " Axis " into a war on the U.S.S.R., to end by landing us in a new war with Germany, the British people would defend their liberty and independence. But this would necessarily involve a fight against the partners of Hitler whose crimes had brought the country to such a pass. In that fight all class conscious British workers and progressives would meet with the enthusiastic support of four hundred million people of the British Empire, and of hundreds of millions outside it.

The issue to-day, however, is not one of a choice between surrender to Hitler or fighting him. To-day Hitler, with all his aeroplanes and all his allies, is in no condition to fight a war. The frightful strain of rearmament, at the frenzied pitch demanded by the Nazis, has left its indelible mark on the people of Germany. All the boasting and lying of the Nazi propagandists, here and in Germany, cannot conceal the imperfections even of the war material produced in the Third Reich. If Hitler is allowed to bang the table, and blackmail, and roar his threats at terrified small States, it is solely thanks to the aid and comfort he gets from the National Government's policy of " appeasement." There is still time to join together all the forces of progress in Great Britain, in order to overthrow that government, and thus deal Hitler,

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through his partners, a severe and maybe decisive blow.

And, to take one pertinent and burning question, it is high time that all progressive forces in Great Britain, instead of wasting time on futile plans for sharing out colonies " for the benefit of the natives," came together to expose and to stop the bloody outrages of Jamaica, of British Guiana, of the other colonies where workers are denied trade union freedom to organise against bestial exploitation and living conditions, which their employers would not tolerate for their animals, and where every arrogant jack-in-office with a white skin has the very lives of the workers at his disposal. Let some of the ruthlessness of denunciation and fierceness of indignation, rightly provoked by the Fascist horrors in Spain and China, beat also on the dark places of the Empire. Then it will be possible *really* to prove concern for " the raising of the standard of life and culture of the less advanced races." and to enlist their co-operation in action which will put an end to the National Government—still the chief international source of strength for the " Axis " of Fascist aggressors.

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What Next in the Trade Unions?

BY GEORGE RUDE

TRADE UNION THINKING has been at a discount during the twenty years since the war. The movement has shot up, declined, shot up again; but by and large these changes have had an elemental character; it has been all spontaneity and very little consciousness, plenty of practice and no theory. So there is something momentous in the appearance of an authoritative historical and analytical volume, under the editorship of Mr. G. D. H. Cole, which for the first time for years gives the trade union movement a detailed picture of its many-sided self and thereby provides the material for a modern thinking-out of union policy and outlook.*

Every aspect of union background, structure, procedure and activity is illuminated by Mr. Cole and his thirty collaborators, who range from Sir Arthur Pugh to Wal Hannington, from J. R. Clynes to W. J. Brown, from Ellen Wilkinson to Dr. J. J. Mallon. Differences in viewpoint naturally produce a certain heterogeneous effect; some lively contribution on an urgent problem will be followed by a stiff "official" communication which walks delicately by any "controversial" issues.† Yet the central fact remains that out of the welter of facts and figures there emerge clearly the essential problems facing the trade union movement to-day, problems that need to be discussed and solved if the movement is to survive and go forward.

How are the great mass of the unorganised workers to be recruited into the unions? Will the trade unions be able to solve the problem of organising the great mass-production factories, the "black-coated" workers and the women? What is to be the future of the shop-stewards movement and factory organisation? What are the trade unions going to do for the unemployed? What are going to be the future relations of the industrial and craft unions? How can the trade unions best work both for the immediate protection of their members under capitalism and for the supersession of the present social order? How can the trade unions play their part in the broader political movement? What is

*_British Trade Unionism To-day_ by G. D. H. Cole and 30 others. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.).

†In this connection, it is interesting to read in Mr. H. H. Elvin's contribution on the Trades Union Congress: "I cannot discuss here the reason why Trades Councils no longer take part in the deliberations of Congress"; while the very next chapter, on Trades Councils, says: "In 1895, the Trades Councils were excluded from the congress, on the plea that their membership duplicated that of the national union, but really to a large extent because they tended to stand for a more advanced policy than the Congress leaders were ready to approve."

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to be done about the leadership of the trade unions ? How is it to change and be changed ?

The Problem of the Unorganised Workers

The question of revitalising and reshaping the trade union movement to be able to cope with the question of organising the Youth, the women, and the unskilled in the new mass-production factories, largely concentrated in the Midlands and the South East of England, is dealt with by various contributors. Mr. John Parker, M.P., Secretary of the New Fabian Research Bureau, discusses the problem in " Trade Union Difficulties in New Areas." He emphasises the lack of solidarity that exists among these workers owing to lack of tradition or connection with the movement, geographical dispersion and often uprooting from their own homes (like the Irish and Welsh builders' labourers, who came into relatively prosperous areas where jobs are to be had from homes on which the shadow of unemployment had hung for years). What is the solution to this urgent problem which leaves oases of non-unionism for the free unfettered exploitation of wage-cutting employers in London and Birmingham ? A problem, be it said, that the industrial workers in France and in the motor, steel and rubber trades of the U.S.A. were able to solve in 1936 and 1937. Mr. Parker refers to the need for a new outlook by the unions and the need for attention by local trades councils—but no further solution is offered.

We get nearer the heart of the problem in an excellent analytical chapter on trades councils—those vital co-ordinating bodies of the local trade union branches which have been excluded from the Trades Union Congress since 1895. Having described these bodies as " indispensable in any national movement which involves the active participation of the rank-and-file," the author concludes that " the Councils have a case for fuller recognition, *especially if the Trade Union movement means to win its way to influence in the unorganised industries.*" (My italics). And surely we are right at the heart of the problem when, in another chapter, he writes :

> Trade Union leadership is apt to be remarkably conservative—until something happens to stir up the mass of ordinary rank-and-file workers into revolt, and even then it is apt to remain aloof and sceptical until victory has been actually achieved. Yet it is only by such mass movements from below that Trade Unionism has won its present degree of power and recognition; and it is plausible to argue that *only a new mass movement of the same character will enable it to conquer the newer mass-production industries, which it seems unable to reach by the traditional methods of approach.* (My italics).

Part and parcel of the same urgent problem is the position of women in industry, of whom only one in nine is organised. This question is exhaustively dealt with in an excellent chapter on " Women in Trade Unions " by Barbara Drake, L.C.C. Miss Drake is, of course, right when she says that " The problem (of " equal pay " and opportunity for

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women—G.R.) is thus closely bound up with the social and economic position of women. Nor can it be solved without profound social and economic changes." Not solved, it is true—but an extension of trade union organisation among women and young girls, particularly in the light engineering, food, chemical and other new industries would go a long way to help. And this question is in turn bound up with that of the future of the craft unions and the unions catering for the metal, furnishing and clothing industries. Can they meet the tasks that face them and by adapting themselves to the conditions of to-day, break down the barriers that still keep millions of workers outside the organised movement?

Significant for this last point is Mr. Cole's chapter showing that there are approximately one million insured workers over the age of 16 unorganised in the metal trades; one million in building and contracting; one million in textiles and clothing; and two million in distribution and commerce, though in this latter field a real concentrated drive has already been begun, with excellent results, particularly by the Shop Assistants' Union which, as Mr. Maurice Hann points out in his contribution to the present book, has increased its membership by 65 per cent. since 1935.

Factory Organisation

It is clear from the experience of not only the British, but the French and American workers, that any mass extension of trade unionism that will bring millions of new workers into the unions must have its base in the factories and on the jobs—and yet Mr. Cole is able to argue, with justice, that the trade union machine in Britain is intrinsically hostile to the idea of factory organisation by means of shop stewards or works committees. "There is indeed," he writes, "a fundamental antagonism between orthodox trade unionism as it has developed in Great Britain and workshop organisation." This is borne out by the complete absence of reference to factory organisation by any single one of the trade union leaders who contribute to this volume. It is even possible for the Rt. Hon. Thomas Johnston to contribute a detailed historical account of Trade Unionism in Scotland without making even a passing reference to the work done by the Clydeside shop stewards during the war.

As Mr. Cole points out, the tendency has always been to consolidate the machine centrally and away from the factories rather than to base the movement on them (as is done, for instance, by the big unions in France to-day). And yet who can deny that it is because the miners in many coalfields, printers, the London bus and tramwaymen have their local organisation based in their place of work that they have been able to keep up a powerful organisation even in the lean and difficult years? But these and the engineering and aircraft shop stewards movements are the exception and Mr. Cole is correct when he relates

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the position to the traditional and historical development of the British movement. But the break with the past has been made in the United States—can it not be done and give fresh vigour to the movement in Britain ?

Trade Union Unity

The detailed description here of the gradual growth of trade unions in Britain with their local and craft traditions and often parochial isolation—which in many spheres exists until this day—is a plea for a vigorous unifying movement that will weld the great British movement together into a co-ordinated, but flexible and democratically constructed body that can cope with present problems. Can the miners as effectively win back recognition as a national negotiating force and the right to a national agreement and solve the wages question in the districts without the creation of a really national Miners' Union ? Can the Lancashire cotton trade unions meet to-day's needs with 166 separate unions ? Can the urgent question of the organisation of the million unorganised workers in the metal trades be solved when (as Mr. J. D. Miller, of the A.E.U. Research Department, tells us) some 60 separate unions cater for the industry and the largest of them, the Amalgamated Engineering Union, debars the 450,000 women in the industry from membership ? Can the Building trades unions afford to continue to be organised on a basis of separate crafts in face of growing rationalisation and mass unemployment ?

These questions all need to be thoroughly explored and the correct solution found—as on the wider issue of unity of all trade unionists on the basis of full rights and opportunities in the movement (*e.g.*, no " Black Circulars," or other discrimination against militants), the unity of employed and unemployed workers and the unity of the international movement.

Trade Unions and Politics

The narrower aspects of the political affiliations of the trade union movement are well dealt with in a very thorough and informative chapter on " Trade Unions in Politics." A very careful analysis is given of the development of the Labour Party by the trade unions and of their present support for and dominance in the Party. From this the important fact emerges that while 87 per cent. of the Distributive and Allied Workers, 86 per cent. of the Weavers, 80 per cent. of the Railway Clerks and 77 per cent. of the Miners paid the " political levy " to the Labour Party in 1935, only 28 per cent. of the A.E.U., 25 per cent. of the Building Trade Workers, 24 per cent. of the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen and 23 per cent. of the Electrical Trades Union did so. The " Big Three " of the T.U.C. General Council (Bevin, Marchbank and Dukes) are able to keep the Labour Party Executive well in order (was it not reported that Bevin threatened to withdraw from the Party

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over the Cripps Memorandum ?) with a " levy "-paying membership of 57 per cent. (Transport and General), 64 per cent. (N.U.R.) and 71 per cent. (General and Municipal) respectively. Should not this fact give the engineers and the building workers, struggling to win the *active* support of the Labour Party Executive against dilution and the Government's arms programme, some food for thought ?

There remain, too, the wider political issues—the struggle of the trade unions against Fascism, their joint action with other sections of the progressive and democratic movement on behalf of Spain and China and the possibility of the trade unions playing a dominant rôle in the people's movement for the overthrow of the Chamberlain Government.

Policy and Leadership

All these problems revolve around the central issue of policy and what the Trade Union Movement stands for. " There is," Mr. Cole writes, " a perpetual conflict inside the Trade Union Movement between two rival conceptions of its purpose." Time and time again this rivalry of conception is brought out in the different views on fundamental issues voiced by various contributors to this volume. The " official " attitude is most clearly expressed by Mr. H. H. Elvin when he praises the Mond-Turner discussions of 1927 on the grounds that " A definite stage in working-class organisation was reached. The General Council was recognised as the centre of authority within the Trade Union Movement." (and yet, on his own reckoning, this happened " in the darkest hour of modern industrial history, from the workers' standpoint ! ") He is more non-committal about the relations of Trade Unions to the State—it " has its dangers as well as its possibilities." Mr. Cole, on the other hand, exposes the " dangers " with reasoned argument and shows how the policy of Mondism (essentially a policy of disunity and defeat which had its forbears in the Industrial Truce of 1914, in Black Friday and the Betrayal of 1926) left the unions disorganised and weakened in face of the employers' attack in 1931.

But Mr. Cole sadly misinterprets the issue involved when he suggests that the " rival conceptions " of the movement are on the one hand that of the " craft " unionist whose determination to cater for the immediate needs of his own *craft* or section blinds him to the wider issues of the class-struggle and " the class-conscious revolutionary " who " may say that it does not matter much what wages and conditions are under capitalism, and that Trade Union policy should always be governed by the necessity of advancing the social revolution." Is not the issue—as Mr. Cole himself appears to be saying in his concluding remarks—rather this—" Is trade unionism to be an active weapon of struggle *which, by fighting for the workers' immediate demands must therefore of necessity fight against capitalism and for the creation of a new social order?* or is it to be an inert fossilised *machine*, refusing to fight on the

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essential issues, *either immediate or ultimate?*"

The answer to this question does not depend upon a handful of individuals either at the top or at the bottom of the movement, but it must depend upon the workers' own ability to develop united action on both the day-to-day and the broader issues in the factories and on the jobs. As Mr. Cole puts it, "Trade Union leadership is apt to be remarkably conservative—until something happens to stir up the mass of ordinary, rank-and-file workers into revolt." Did that not happen here in 1889, in 1910-14, and in our own day in France?

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Austria a Nation

BY ANTON HART

A YEAR AGO, on March 11, 1938, German troops crossed the Austrian frontier. Austria, which for a thousand years had led an independent national existence, was militarily occupied and its independence destroyed. Pan-German imperialism, risen anew in Nazi vestments, conquered at one stroke a territory covering 33,000 square miles with 6½ million inhabitants, which was never German but always has been Austrian.

There are still statesmen who cling desperately to Hitler's words and are prepared to base their policy upon them. Austria has had to pay for Schuschnigg's trust in Hitler's words with the loss of its national independence. In the Treaty of July 11, 1936, Hitler voluntarily undertook to guarantee the independence of Austria and not to interfere in its internal affairs. In article 1 of this Treaty we read: "In the sense of the statements of the Leader and Reich Chancellor of May, 21 1935,* the German Government recognises the complete sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria." Article 2 reads: "Each of the two governments regards the inner political condition existing in the other country, including the question of Austrian National Socialism, as the affair of the other State and will never, either directly or indirectly, exert influence upon them." Hitler broke his given word, when he became certain that the annexation of Austria would not meet with any resistance on the part of the democratic Western Powers.

In the March days of last year the Nazis still spread the legend that the Reichswehr marched into Austria only because they were summoned by the Seyss-Inquart Government in order to "protect" the Austrian people. At the press conference which took place on March 22, 1938, Goebbels declared:

> The international press has accused us of bending the Austrian people under our dictatorship by an act of violence. We did not break into Austria; the Seyss-Inquart government summoned us, not to tyrannise over the people, but to protect them. The Fuehrer could not refuse to answer this call. He did not desire to.

In his speech of January 30, last, however, Hitler declared:

> I wanted to bring my homeland, Austria, back to Germany. *In January, 1938, I decided to achieve this aim by peaceful or other means.* I called Schuschnigg to Berchtesgaden and told him that the torture of Germans in Austria would no longer be tolerated. A few days later Schuschnigg attempted his plebiscite swindle. He announced it on Wednesday, and the same night I ordered a mobilisation and an invasion by Saturday.

*"Germany has neither the will nor the intention to interfere in the internal affairs of, to annex or to unite with Austria." (Hitler in Reichstag, May 21, 1935).

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Thus Hitler had decided already in January, 1938, to conquer Austria by means of force. The order to march in, which was given on Wednesday, had nothing to do with the summons of the Seyss-Inquart government to march into Austria, as this government was not yet in existence on the Wednesday, but was first set up on the Friday.

After the annexation of Austria, Goering made a reassuring declaration to Czechoslovakia that the Third Reich would respect its state independence. Six months later, Czechoslovakia was dismembered by Hitler.

In annexing Austria Hitler was not concerned about emancipating the " oppressed brothers," the majority of whom did not wish to have anything to do with him, nor about realising the " right of self-determination." It was a coolly calculated and deliberate attack, with the aim, after Austria, to break the back of Czechoslovakia. " By seizing Austria first," wrote Harry Pollitt in his pamphlet, *Save Austria—Save Britain*, " the Nazis will be able to carry our their attack on Czechoslovakia from three sides. These are the real reasons for the brutal invasion and annexation of Austria and the crushing of the Austrian people's freedom and independence." The course of events has confirmed this estimate. With the annexation of Austria and the crushing of Czechoslovakia, Hitler has obtained a key position in Central Europe from whence he can take up the fight for hegemony in Europe and for world domination, under incomparably more favourable conditions than could ever the pan-German imperialism of the pre-war period.

II.

Military annexation was followed by economic colonisation. The rich German banking and industrial enterprises immediately took possession of the largest Austrian banks and factories. The Kreditanstalt, which had control of two-thirds of the large factories of Austria, was " aryanised " and handed over to German control. The Hermann Goering works annexed the Alpine Montan works and the Styrian ore deposits, as well as the Steyr motor-car and ammunition works, the Daimler-Puch works and the Danube Steamship Company, the largest shipping firm on the Danube. In the remaining industries the same process is nearing completion. The whole of Austrian industry has been assimilated to Goerings' Four Year Plan of war preparation, and its foreign trade completely ruined through the stranglehold on the import of raw materials, and the ruthless German competition. In spite of all this, the 453 million mark *favourable* German trade balance of 1937 (1932 : 1,073 millions) has been converted to an *unfavourable* balance of nearly 500 million marks for " Greater Germany," and of this sum half represents Austria's share.

The standard of living of the population has been extraordinarily reduced. Prices, in spite of the " price fixation orders " have, according to Vienna District Leader Globocnik, in many cases risen 50 per cent.

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There is not enough milk or butter. According to the Economic Institutes' official reports the price of veal rose from March to November by 23.5 per cent., that of pork 30 per cent. So-called " customers cards," a disguised form of ration cards, as used in war time, are to be introduced for the retail purchase of all important foods. To date they exist only for fats and eggs.

Real wages have been reduced 25 per cent. by a dishonest rate of exchange. According to the official figures of the Vienna Labour Office the purchasing power of a Reichsmark was worth 1.20 shillings (Austrian). The prescribed rate of exchange, however, is 1.50 shillings. District Leader Bürkel explained in a speech that was listened to compulsorily by all factory-workers :

> A rise in wages—a question that arises again and again in the most varied forms—is least to be thought of . . . . an honest worker must not think of an increase of three or five marks as the most important matter . . . . the morale is relatively better in factories that pay low wages.

The eight-hour day was abolished in conformity with German law. In the armaments industry, in agriculture and in other nationally important fields a 10-12 hour working day is the rule. Following an order of December 20, 1938, two further hours over-time daily are permitted.

Unemployment was appreciably reduced through taking many workers into the war industries. A large section were put to military and labour service; tens of thousands of Jews, thrown out of the factories in the process of " Aryanisation," are omitted from the unemployed figures, just as are the 50,000 workless who are described as no longer " employable." 100,000 unemployed were sent compulsorily into the " Reich," from which they run away again in shoals. They are then ruthlessly re-transported into the " Old Reich." The *Völkische Beobachter* (Vienna Edition, December 22, 1938) writes :

> . . . . Austrian working men, who had been apportioned to the " Altreich " (*i.e.*, Germany), have attempted to return immediately to their Ostmarkian (*i.e.*, Austrian) home. To give in to these attempts would result in a short time in the majority of these Ostmarkians employed in the Old Reich having returned home. The employment exchanges of Ostmark have therefore been instructed to take action against unjustified homecoming. Men who have returned in this way will be immediately re-apportioned to the Old Reich.

This gives one a picture of the conditions under which the Austrian workers are compelled to work and live in Germany.

The small shopkeepers are severely disappointed. Many had hoped for an improvement in their position. Was not one of the points in the national socialist programme " . . . .The immediate communalisation of the large stores and their renting at low rates to small shopkeepers. Strong consideration for all small shopkeepers in deliveries to the state the provincial governments and borough councils." ? (Point 16 of the national socialist programme). There is naturally now no question of renting out the large stores to small shopkeepers. The sale of milk,

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however, was concentrated in the hands of the large milk combines, and thousands of small dairymen excluded from it. Tax collection is ruthless. The small handicraftsmen, driven to ruin, are advised to close their workshops and to join the factories.

The situation of the peasants has greatly worsened. Under Schuschnigg the Nazis agitated among the peasantry for a tax-strike, now the arrears of taxation are ruthlessly collected. The much publicised " Act for Debt Remittance " for the peasantry has become an " Act for Debt Transference." The only advantage of debt remittance is the lowering of the rate of interest, but the peasant simultaneously loses his rights over his homestead. The heaviest burden of the peasantry is the compulsory nature of their work. As in wartime they are instructed as to what they are to sow. The whole crop must be handed over. The lord of the farm is not its peasant owner but the Nazi Commissar. The forests are plundered. 150 per cent. of the year's growth is felled, to satisfy the increased demand of the war industries.

The whole population in Austria is filled with deep dissatisfaction. In the factories the workers, in spite of all prohibitions, make demands for wage increases and even obtain partial success. The Catholics—90 per cent. of the population—are, in overwhelming majority, definite enemies of the national socialist régime. Common necessity has destroyed the division that formerly separated the supporters of Schuschnigg from the left parties. The Catholics turn to the members of the working class parties with requests for assistance in illegal work. The call for united struggle is extraordinarily vehement. The demand is increasing that the Austrian émigrés should also unite for a common struggle for the liberation of Austria.

The National Socialists openly admit their bankruptcy. In a speech on February 4, 1939, District Leader Buerckel said :

> The question is still being put : has the standard of living risen, or fallen, or stayed the same ? I am a long way from saying that living conditions have in every way improved. I do not do this for two reasons : (1) because it is not true, and (2) because to keep silent on this fact would be stupid.

Even if Buerckel excuses the situation a hundred times by saying that " guns must be produced instead of food," he will meet on such grounds with least response from the peace-loving Austrian people, who have not the least understanding or approval of National Socialism's plans for imperialist domination.

The Austrian people feels only hatred for their foreign invader who has seized their country by the use of armed force. The struggle for social and economic liberation from the National-Socialist domination is at the same time a struggle for national liberation.

III.

The National Socialists are against Austria's independence and deny that she has any right to a separate existence, thereby consciously

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contradicting historical facts.

For a thousand years Austria has played an independent rôle. She existed before the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation was founded in 962. She continued to exist when the Empire came to an end in 1806. The foundation of Austria took place as long ago as 798 A.D. A hundred years later she was overwhelmed by the invading Magyars, but eventually (in 955) she finally defeated them and once more, in 976 A.D., was set up as an independent state. Austria came to be the bulwark of Europe against the invading Turks. After the Battle of Mohacs (1526), which ended in a victory of the Turks over the Hungarians, Austria organised the peoples of the Middle Danube Basin into one political group.

As Austria was the result of colonisation in the South-East, so Prussia was the result of colonisation in the North-East. She developed as a barrier against the Slavs. Originally she was merely an outpost of the former Mark of Brandenburg, itself a military colony. Only after the Thirty Years War did Prussia begin to take a leading part in the affairs of the German Reich, when she became an instrument in the hand of the Great European Powers, particularly of France against Austria.

In the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) Austria's attempt to gain control of the German Reich failed. The mutual enmity of Austria and Prussia became even more acute. In 1740 Prussia proposed the division of Austria and in alliance with France conquered Austria. Austria lost Silesia and would have been completely dismembered had not England intervened. England wanted to avoid a complete victory of the Franco-Russian coalition as this would have upset the balance of power in Europe. In the Seven Years' War from 1756 to 1763 Prussia, in alliance with England, successfully made war against a coalition of France, Austria and Russia, and emerged firmly established as a great Power. In 1785 Prussia organised the " Alliance of German Princes," which was directed against Austria.

The hate of the French Revolution, common to both powers, drew them together for a short time. In 1792 they threw themselves together upon revolutionary France. The Commander-in-Chief of the Prussian Army, the Count of Braunschweig, in his manifesto, swore he was going to raze Paris to the ground. The war, however, came to an inglorious end for Austria and Prussia. It led to the breaking-up of the old German Reich, and on August 6, 1806, the Emperor Francis II laid down the crown of the German Reich. Thus the " Holy Roman Empire " came to an end. Shortly after, on October 14, 1806, the old Prussian State was destroyed by a double defeat at the battles of Jena and Auerstaedt.

When Napoleon had been defeated, the German Alliance (Deutscher Bund) was formed at the Congress of Vienna, without any end being made to the opposition of Austria and Prussia to each other.

In the Revolution of 1848, Marx and Engels fought for the setting up of a great German Republic. They hoped to end the enmity between

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Prussia and Austria by the overthrow of the Prussian as well as the Austrian Autocracy. Their efforts proved fruitless because of the backward economic and political conditions in Austria and Prussia.

In 1866, the fight between Prussia and Austria for the domination of Germany came to an end. At the battle of Königgratz, in 1866, Austria was defeated and finally retired from the German scene. Bismarck formed the North German Alliance with Prussia at its head, and after the victorious Franco-German war, " The German Reich." Thus came to an end, as Marx and Engels wrote, " the eternal brawl " over the establishment of Germany Unity.

The idea of " Greater Germany," except in the year of the Revolution in 1848, met with little response in Austria. It was only taken up by a small group of democrats and a reactionary clique around the Deputy Schönerer, with whom the National Socialists rightly associated themselves.

After the defeat in the Great War, which left Austria in a hopeless economic condition, a movement was called into being by the Social-Democratic leadership for " Anschluss " with Germany. In so far as this movement for the Anschluss found any response at all among the Austrian population, the reason for it was not so much motivated by nationalistic as by economic motives. The same motives caused the county of Vorarlberg to come to the decision to leave Austria and become part of Switzerland.

After the victory of Hitler in Germany the Social Democrats withdrew the Anschluss from their official programme and declared themselves ready to fight for Austria's independence.

Dollfuss and Schuschnigg, because of their anti-Marxist blinkers, wished to safeguard Austria's independence by compromising with the Nazis at home and making treaties with Hitler, instead of relying upon a popular movement led by the working class. Only a few weeks before the invasion did Schuschnigg decide to give more freedom to the workers. The popular movement for the defence of Austria's independence developed with astonishing force. Hitler recognised the danger that threatened him, and before the movement could grow to its full strength, he had trampled it under the feet of his troops in their lightning invasion.

The idea of Austrian independence is deeply rooted in the people as a whole. It cannot be removed by violence. For almost a thousand years Austria played her part in the binding together of the peoples of the Danube Basin and continued to do so throughout all the storms that have raged over Europe. Thereby she has more than borne witness in history to her unassailable right to an independent existence.

IV.

The fact that Austria once formed part of the " Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation " and that its inhabitants speak the German

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language provided Hitler with an excuse for the annexation of Austria. The statesmen of the Western Democracies who capitulated to Hitler accepted this argument, and in addition presented him with the Sudeten district. Unfortunately, however, there are " Revolutionary Socialists " who see in the forcible annexation of Austria an historically progressive act. They cite Marx and Engels, who up to the year 1866 advocated the creation of a great German Republic which should include Austria. This solution was never realised.

Bismarck united Germany under the leadership of Prussia. Although this union came about by a " revolution from above " and was not in accordance with the desires of Marx and Engels, this did not prevent them from recognising its progressive character. It put an end to Germany's lack of economic and political co-ordination and prepared the way for capitalist development and thereby also for the development of a united Labour movement. To compare the annexation of Austria by Hitler with the unification of Germany by Bismarck, one must either have lost all sense of historical realities or be a defender of Hitler.

Lenin fiercely combated that " revolutionary " tendency in the Polish Social Democracy which, while it was opposed to the oppressive policy of the imperialists, nevertheless rejected the idea of the restoration of Polish independence, because it did not wish to set up again the frontier barriers which had been torn down by imperialism. The " Revolutionary Socialists " to-day come forward with the very same arguments against the restoration of Austrian independence. Viewed from a broad historical perspective, development is undoubtedly proceeding in the direction of the abolition of all frontier barriers, the coming together and merging of the nations. But this state of affairs, which will come about only under Communism, pre-supposes the complete development of the right of self-determination and the full unfolding of the national culture of the different peoples. To represent the *present* violent annexations by National Socialism as " progressive " by pointing to the *future* development has nothing whatever to do with Socialism.

With the same legal title with which Hitler annexed Austria, England could just as well carry out the annexation of the United States of America. Not only do the Americans speak English, but America was founded by the English. It was English Puritans who, at the beginning of the 17th century, created the New England Confederation. America arose as the result of the merging together of thirteen English colonies. England could with just as much right lay claim to America as the Prussian Third Reich to Austria. Austria was not founded by Prussia, but existed long before Prussia came into being. Austria could not even learn the German language from the Prussians, whose forefathers, the " Pruzzen," spoke a Lithuanian dialect.

If one accepts this " legal principle " enunciated by Hitler, then how can one deny him the right to annex Switzerland ? Switzerland too was

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once a part of the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation." More than 70 per cent. of its population speak German. According to this "legal principle," Hitler can demand not only Switzerland but the *whole of Europe*, as it too was at one time under the rule of the German Emperor. This is what the National Socialists are actually doing. Professor Tackenberg, of Bonn, pointed out in a lecture that

> the whole of Europe was at one time occupied by wandering Germans, who lost this territory only because they violated the laws of blood. (*Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, No. 194, 1938).

Now, when Hitler insists so strictly on the observance of the laws of "blood," there is obviously nothing standing in the way of the recovery of the "lost" territory. What Hitler means by "Greater Germany" is shown by the National Socialist Training Course (January, 1938), which was published in an edition of three million. Here we read :

> Greater Germany is a racial concept, not a section of state frontiers dependent upon time and chance. It will embrace all areas of Central Europe which by language belong to the German-speaking area, and beyond this the German cultural region and all areas formerly settled by Germans.

What Pan-Slavism was for the Tsar—Engels called it a world hegemony swindle—"Greater Germany" and the "whole German nation," is for Hitler.

The National Socialist rulers of Germany threaten to plunge the whole world into a frightful war. The only chance of at least postponing this war is the adoption of a firm, resolute policy by the democratic States and refusal to make any concession to the blackmailers. Such a policy would above all strengthen the opposition forces among the Austrian and German people, and render it more difficult for Hitler to carry out his war plans. Should he nevertheless embark on war, the war will end the more quickly the stronger the opposition in the country itself.

Viewed from this angle, the struggle of the Austrian people for the restoration of its freedom and independence acquires decisive importance. It weakens and disintegrates the National Socialist dictatorial régime and, fusing with the great opposition movement of the German people, becomes that force which is undermining the barbarous rule of National Socialism from within.

The Austrian question cannot be separated from the whole European question, from the solution of the problem of the Danube region. Without real respect for the right of self-determination of the peoples there can be no lasting peace. No matter how Austria may settle her relations with her neighbour, she will never renounce her right to decide for herself how these relations shall be settled, any more than she will renounce her right to lead her own national life. Free, independent Austria will play a decisive part in any fresh settlement of the Central European problem in the Danube area.

Hitler is exterminating everything in Austria which is reminiscent

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of " Austria." Just as the Tsar rechristened the " Congress Kingdom " of Poland, assigned to him after the Vienna Congress, the " Vistula district," in order to blot out from the mind of the Polish people all memory of the name " Poland," so Hitler is eradicating the name of Austria. " Upper Austria " and " Lower Austria " have been renamed " Upper Danube " and " Lower Danube." The Tsar, however, was just as little able to prevent the resurrection of Poland as Hitler can prevent the resurrection of Austria.

Let nobody believe that the principles of liberty and the right of self-determination of the peoples can be violated with impunity because it is a question of a small, defenceless people. The surrender of Austria did not serve the cause of peace but led inevitably to the surrender of Czechoslovakia, and will lead to the ruin of Europe if the democracies do not make up their minds to uphold principles which form the moral foundation of their existence.

The fight of the English democracy for the emancipation of Poland from the yoke of Tsarism constitutes one of the most famous chapters in the history of the English people. Austria is being oppressed by a Power more cruel and barbarous than Tsarism ever was. The English people has an even greater interest to-day in the overthrow of the National Socialist régime, for the sake of peace and liberty, than it had in the overthrow of Tsarism, and therefore also in the fight of the Austrian people for freedom, for the restoration of its independence.

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Greece under the Nazi Shadow

BY ODYSSEUS ANDROUTSOS

SINCE HE BECAME dictator of Greece on August 4, 1936, General Metaxas has consistently tried to fulfil two major objectives. The first was to crush the popular movement which, without regard to political and social opinions, had striven to raise the standard of living of the people and for the democratisation of the country's political life. But if such a policy represented the wishes of the ruling classes great misgivings existed amongst them as to the wisdom of putting at the head of a fascist government a politician who, six months before, had received at the general elections only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total votes and who, by a political past of systematic inconsistency exceeding the limits of political decency, had done nothing towards commending himself to popular respect. Thus the attitude of the great bulk of capitalists was one of simple toleration and expectation, while only a small number of them collaborated actively with the régime. Identical was the view-point adopted by the officer corps which, through continuous purges, had been deprived of most of its democratic elements. To change this toleration into active support, and thus acquire for his government a wider basis has been the second objective pursued by the Dictator.

Internally, the policy followed by the régime has been primarily directed against the great mass of the people. Wages have been kept static while the cost of living was rising because of the rise in world prices, the increase in taxation on tobacco, stamps, etc., the increase in duties on articles of prime necessity like coffee, textiles, and the wholesale export of olive oil, which is a basic item of dietary. On the political field the violent persecution of the Communists was gradually extended against the leaders and members of practically all the other parties. At present 13,000 persons overcrowd the prisons, the concentration camp of Acronauplia and the rocky pocket islands of the Aegean, where treatment and conditions of life are steadily deteriorating. On the cultural field, every progressive thought of the present and the past is being rigorously persecuted—Thucydides' funeral speech of Pericles because of its praise of democracy, Sophocles' Antigone because of its attacks on the tyrants.

In his foreign policy, neither the idea of a United Balkans withstanding the German drive, nor the continuance of the traditional policy of collaboration with Great Britain and France (in order to resist

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Mussolini's expansionist aims) could, with their flavour of internationalism and anti-Fascism, appeal to the General. The internal orientation of his régime drew him towards a collaboration with the dictator powers. Germany was quick to seize upon this opportunity. German money is poured into Greece with the object of acquiring the good graces of newspapers and leading political and business personalities. Nazi leaflets are being translated and distributed for the price of a halfpenny. The German colony in Athens is solidly organised and its newspaper, the *Athener Zeitung*, is being distributed free to well-to-do Greek families. The German newspapers publish regularly enthusiastic articles about the achievements of the "New Greece," translations of which are published immediately by the regimented Greek press. The Government is indeed only too ready to help. While a great number of difficulties confront Greek students wishing to continue their studies in France and England, every facility is being offered by the Government to whomsoever wants to travel to Germany. There has been no official confirmation of the reports that Dr. Goebbels contributed to the fund of the "Special Security Police" and that secret service agents are being sent to Germany for the completion of their training, but it is a fact that in the Greek police headquarters there are four autographed photographs hanging peacefully together: the King, General Metaxas, Hitler and Dr. Goebbels. German cultural influence in Greece is steadily increasing.

Economically the share of German trade has been constantly on the increase. Already in the Spring of 1936, General Metaxas, then Constitutional Premier, was warned by M. Tsouderos, Governor of the Bank of Greece, and the party leaders of the dangers facing Greece because of the increase in her active balance in the German-Greek clearing relations. Towards the end of 1936, when the reserve of the Bank of Greece began to dwindle rapidly as a result of the German policy, Metaxas accepted payment by Germany through the delivery of armaments of a total value of over four-and-a-half million pounds. The then Minister of Finance, M. Zavitsianos, resigned.

Germany had tried to enforce the same method of paying her debts through the delivery of armaments upon all the other Balkan countries; they would thus be compelled to turn again to her for renewals, and their political dependance upon her would be increased. Only Jugoslavia and Greece accepted the proposal. Turkey, realising their political implications, refused extremely profitable offers put to her by the Krupp concern on the subject of the refortification of the Dardanelles. "It is not sheer coincidence," comments P. Einzig (*Bloodless Invasion*, p. 33), "that among the statesmen responsible for the destinies of the various Danubian and Balkan States, General Metaxas and M. Stoyadinovitch, are easily the most sympathetic towards German policy." The German material proved of such inferior quality that the General, who had grandiloquently proclaimed

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his intention of creating "an army comparable to that of the most advanced states," was, according to Mr. Einzig, obliged to smuggle it to Spain. Meanwhile Germany is spoiling the Greek markets by re-exporting Greek tobacco. This suicidal policy of putting all the eggs of the country's economic life in one basket, thereby obviating any possibility of independence in her foreign relations, has been pursued by the Government for entirely partisan reasons, its aim being the creation of vested interests favourable to the maintenance of its régime.

In his foreign policy, Metaxas from the first moment of coming to power, opposed the attempted formation of a Balkan Bloc destined to resist German penetration. By his refusal in 1936 to co-operate with the other countries of the Balkan Entente for the defence of all their frontiers he pushed Jugoslavia into the arms of Italy and Germany. In January, 1937, Jugoslavia signed a pact of "eternal friendship" with Bulgaria, without consulting her other Balkan friends—thus violating the Balkan pact. Thereby the system of collective security in the Balkans received its first severe shock.

Events since Munich show how contrary to the national interest the policy of Metaxas has been. Owing to her remoteness from Germany Greece is not among those countries whose collaboration Hitler needs for his Balkan drive; on the contrary he might usefully sacrifice her for the purchase of eventual allies and obtain at the same time the much-desired outlet to the Mediterranean. As the correspondent of the Paris *Ordre* reported on November 8 and 14, 1938, German propaganda in the Balkans is being successfully directed towards the formation of a Jugoslav-Bulgarian bloc, with the promise of an expansion at the expense of Greece. Already the Bulgarian Government, through semi-official feelers in the European Capitals, the Bulgarian Nationalists, by demonstrations against Rumania and Greece, the I.M.R.O. (I. notorious "Macedonian revolutionary organisation"), through a renewal of its terrorist activity, have raised the demand for the cession by Greece of Alexandroupolis, an entirely Greek harbour situated in close proximity to the Dardenelles. Meanwhile the Greek Government is becoming alarmed by reports of Italian aspirations towards Corfu and Crete.

Against these increasing dangers no real resistance is being organised by General Metaxas. Instead of preparing public opinion he tries by every means to dispel the growing apprehension of the people, fearing an increased pressure for the formation of an all-party democratic cabinet. The same hatred of democracy hinders any determined and convincing attempt on his part to re-orientate the country's foreign policy. In the light of recent experience, one is indeed entitled to serious doubts as to his willingness to uphold any real resistance to the drive of Germany and her potential allies. He might later be faced with the necessity of sacrificing either class interests and personal power or the national independence of Greece, and the decision, as has been illus-

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trated by Czecho-Slovakia, need not be in favour of the former alternative.

The danger of being transformed into a German colony is equally great for all the Balkan countries. This is being clearly realised by the Balkan peoples, for whom indeed the struggle for political democracy, social liberation and national independence are becoming increasingly identified under the general heading of anti-Fascism. Co-operation among the Balkan States is necessary if they are to wage a successful fight for their independence; to this end the formation of an alliance of all the democratic forces and the establishment of progressive democracies, the peaceful revision of the peace treaties carried out with popular consent and under popular control, the granting of equality of rights to all the national minorities and close co-operation on all questions of economic and foreign policy, constitute the *conditio sine qua non;* collaboration with the great democracies would implement this arrangement. In the case of Greece the persecution of the Macedonian minority would have to cease and a commercial outlet to the Aegean be granted to Bulgaria.

Even from the point-of-view of her imperial interests alone the fate of Greece cannot be considered " no concern " of Great Britain. The domination of the Eastern Mediterranean through the British-Turkish alliance will not be possible without the collaboration of a friendly Greece, whose islands control the principal Turkish ports and the trade route through the Dardanelles. It must not be thought, however, that Greece, under any government whatsoever, will become—because of her " natural " interests—the ally of Great Britain and France, once her own independence is threatened. The danger exists, that under M. Metaxas she may be transformed in the " Franco Spain " of the Eastern Mediterranean.

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Mexico and Oil

BY JOSE JORGE MARCH

[*Senor March, Chief of the Department of Sales Promotion for Mexican Petroleum, gave the following article as an interview to an English journalist, Anne Kelly.*]

I WILL BEGIN from 1934, when there existed about thirty-five independent oil workers' unions throughout the industry. A first attempt was made in 1934 to organise the workers into one union, but that attempt failed on account of the measures taken by the oil companies to introduce dissension and " Whites " into the Unions. In 1935 another Convention was called, and in spite of the efforts of the companies the idea succeeded, resulting in the formation of the " Oil workers' Union."

Different labour contracts were at that time in force in different refineries and camps, and there were considerable contrasts existing, not only between the various companies, but within each company. Our first problem after the Union was formed was to endeavour to make conditions of work uniform throughout the industry. At the first " Extraordinary Convention " of the Union held at the beginning of 1936 a general contract was drawn up, based upon precedents already obtained by different groups. The Companies replied by—

(*a*) refusing to accept any contract,

(*b*) breaking individual " group " contracts already in operation.

According to the Mexican Labour law, at the end of ten days the Oil Workers' Union called a General Strike for the 27th November, 1936. President Cardenas intervened and in the interests of the Republic asked the Union to consent to a six months' period for discussion with the companies. To demonstrate their goodwill in coming to an agreement the Union agreed to this and called off the strike, reserving the right to take action after the expiration of the agreed period if no settlement had been reached.

Twenty days before the period ended, out of 250 clauses, the companies had only approved 21, 19 of which were merely concerning questions of administration. In view of the failure of the conversations, the companies proposed to end these by submitting to us an " agreement " which would constitute their " last word." This " last word " was a mockery, for instead of improving, the proposed agreement cut existing standards. Their purpose was clear—to provoke a General Strike. The companies could resist one or two months, the workers probably might, but what about the economic needs of the nation? The policy of the companies was clever because they hoped to put the Government on a " hard spot " and make Cardenas declare the strike illegal. It must be remembered that during this six months'

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period the companies broke 17 local agreements, making a very careful selection of breaking those contracts won by the more aggressive and militant groups of workers, in the hope of provoking many small strikes which would have the effect of alienating public sympathy with the oil workers, or even provoking a general strike to regain what was already obtained instead of having a general movement for new grantings.

The workers remained disciplined and united, and on the 28th May, 1937, a ten days' strike commenced. The companies reply was that they "could not" grant our demands, and on June 7th, to give the companies a chance to *prove* that they "could not," we went into economic conflict. (*i.e.*, The Union entered suit against the companies for the establishment of the new conditions, by means of an "economic conflict" before the Federal Board of Conciliation and Arbitration.)

Principal Points of Union's Demands

1. Maximum of 114 "confidential employees," plus an unlimited number of legal representatives for each company. All other employees to be controlled by the Union.
2. In cases of lay-offs, an indemnity to each worker dismissed equal to 90 days' wages, plus 25 days' wages for each year, or fraction of a year greater than six months, that he had been in the company's employ.
3. Workers voluntarily leaving their employment after 10 years' service to be paid an indemnity of 25 days' wages for each year. Should his leaving be caused by abrogation of the labour contract through the employers' fault, an additional indemnity of 90 days' wages.
4. Establishment of the 40-hour work-week.
5. Medical service, on a disease-prevention basis, to be furnished at the cost of the employer, with the necessary facilities for diagnosis, adequate medical installation, and the elimination of all humiliating red tape.
6. In cases of death from non-occupational causes, the payment of 60 days' wages and funeral expenses, in addition to an indemnity of 25 days' wages for each year the worker had been employed.
7. In cases of death from occupational causes, an indemnity equal to 1,400 days' wages.
8. In cases of total and permanent disability from occupational causes, an indemnity of 1,825 days' wages, plus the equivalent of 25 days' wages for each year of service. If the injured worker had been employed more than ten years, the granting of a pension for total disability from occupational causes.
9. The establishment of a pension system varying between full wages after 30 years' and 60 per cent. of wages after ten years' employment.
10. Eighteen compulsory rest days a year.
11. Vacations for workers employed up to 5 years, 25 days a year; from 5 to 10 years, 40 days; from 10 to 15 years, 50 days; and from 15 years up, 60 days.
12. The establishment of a Savings Fund to be made up as follows: a 10 per cent. discount from wages, contributed by the workers, and an amount equal to 15 per cent. of wages contributed by the employers.
13. The founding of 45 scholarships for workers or their children.
14. An opportunity for Mexican workmen to acquire the experience necessary to replace foreign technicians.

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15. The furnishing of sanitary and comfortable housing for all workers, or the payment, in lieu of this service, of 2 pesos daily to each worker.

16. Wage increases totalling 28,149,560 pesos.

17. Total increase of annual labour costs under the proposed new contract, 65,474,840 pesos.

18. Total annual labour costs under the contract proposed by the Union, 114,611,460 pesos.

Conclusions of the Report rendered by the Expert Commission Appointed by the President of the Republic to Investigate the Financial Conditions of the Oil Companies.

1. The principal oil companies operating in Mexico form part of large North-American or English economic units.

2. The principal oil companies operating in Mexico have never been fully integrated to the country, and their interests have always been alien, and on occasion even opposed, to the interests of the nation.

3. The principal oil companies operating in Mexico have left nothing in the country but wages and taxes, without in reality having co-operated in the social progress of Mexico.

4. The principal oil companies operating in Mexico have earned abundant profits in the exploitation of the subsoil. It is not possible to calculate the total amount, but, at a conservative estimate, it may be asserted: hat the majority of the companies recovered their invested capital more than a decade ago.

5. Considered on a world basis, the oil industry is financially more important than any other great industry.

6. On more than one occasion the great petroleum interests have exerted an influence on national and international political events.

7. Oil production began in Mexico in 1901, in unimportant quantities ; it reached its greatest volume in 1921 and then declined constantly to 1932. From that date on, a slight improvement has been noted, due to the exploitation of the fields of Poza Rica and El Plan.

8. The decline of oil production in Mexico is due to the exhaustion of the deposits, principally those of La Faja de Oro and Cacalilao, to the absence of new and intensive exploration for the discovery of fresh fields, and, possibly, to the policies of the oil companies as well.

9. Drilling activities have fallen off alarmingly in recent years. In 1936, drilling operations were several times smaller than in 1926, in spite of the fact that a higher percentage of productive wells is brought in now than ten years ago.

10. All the oil fields of Mexico are about to become exhausted, with the exception of those of Poza Rica and El Plan, the production of which is estimated at a probable 50 million barrels a year for the next ten or twelve years.

11. The exploration of new fields and the drilling of new wells is a national problem which it is essential to solve. Otherwise the danger exists of a petroleum shortage in Mexico within a relatively short period, and oil will have to be imported.

12. There are large zones of possible oil fields in the coastal plain of the Gulf of Mexico, in the northern part of the States of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas, and in several other regions of the country.

13. Production in 1936 was 7.48 per cent. greater than in 1934, due to the very large increase (26.17 per cent.) in the production of light crude oil, while that of heavy crude declined 33.14 per cent.

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14. There have been changes in the characteristics of the Mexican oil industry in recent years. From 1920-24, and even in subsequent years, the greater part of the production was exported, whereas in 1936 national consumption absorbed 16.86 per cent. of the heavy crude oil produced, 99.9 per cent. of the light crude, and 43.5 per cent. of refined products.

15. Nearly 60 per cent. of the Mexican production of crude oil and derivatives is exported to two countries : the United States and England.

16. In the year 1936 the Mexican Eagle Petroleum Co. controlled 59.33 per cent. of total production. This fact reveals a monopolistic tendency.

17. Rising prices for oil and petroleum derivatives in recent months indicate excellent prospects for the industry, at least in the near future.

18. Prices of commodities of primary necessity, entering into the customary diet of a working-class family of 5 members in the oil zones, had risen 88.96 per cent. in June ,1937, in comparison with 1934 averages.

19. The real wages of the great majority of oil workers are at present lower than those earned by workers in the mining industry.

20. The real wages of the great majority of oil workers are at present lower than those earned by workers of the National Railroads of Mexico.

21. The real wages of the great majority of oil workers are at present lower than those they earned in 1934, by at least 16 to 22 per cent., the decrease varying in indirect proportion to the size of the nominal wage.

22. The real wages of oil workers in the United States, in the second quarter of 1937, were 7.84 per cent. higher than those obtaining in 1934.

23. According to the books of the oil companies, the selling price of their products is invariably lower than the price quotations in trade publications which accurately reflect market conditions.

24. The prices at which the oil companies sell petroleum derivatives in Mexico are considerably higher than the prices at which they sell the same products abroad.

25. The price charged by the Eagle Co. (and the same may be said of the other companies) for gas oil in Mexico (1934-36 average) was 171.75 per cent. higher than the price at which the same article was sold abroad.

26. The price charged by the Eagle Co. (and the same may be said of the other companies) for gasoline in Mexico (1934-36 average, less the consumption tax) was 193.4 per cent. higher than the price at which the same product was sold abroad.

27. The price charged by the Eagle Co. (and the same may be said of the other companies) for kerosene in Mexico (1934-36 average) was 341.18 per cent. higher than that at which the same product was sold abroad.

28. The price charged by the Eagle Co. (and the same may be said of the other companies) for lubricants in Mexico (1934-36 average) was 350.76 per cent. higher than that at which the same products were sold abroad.

29. The prices for petroleum derivatives charged by the oil companies in Mexico are so exorbitant that they constitute an evident obstacle to the economic development of the country.

30. The annual average of the social capital of the oil companies, with the exception of the Mexican Gulf Co., which did not permit an examination of its books, was 164 million pesos in the period 1934-1936.

31. The annual non-amortized invested capital of the oil companies,

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with the exception of the Mexican Gulf Co., was 335 million pesos in the period 1934-36.

32. The reserves and surplus of the oil companies (1934-36 average), with the exception of the Mexican Gulf, was 79 million pesos.

33. The rate of profit, in relation to the social capital of the oil companies, with the exception of the Mexican Gulf, averaged 34.28 per cent. in the years 1931-36.

34. The rate of profit in relation to non-amortized invested capital of the oil companies, with the exception of the Mexican Gulf, averaged 16.21 per cent. in the years 1934 to 1936.

35. In the year 1935 the principal oil companies of the United States earned profits of 6.13 per cent. on their invested capital.

36. The profits of all the oil companies of the United States in relation to their invested capital were: in 1931, 2.76 per cent.; in 1932 they showed a loss; in 1933, 1.7 per cent.; in 1934, 2.2 per cent.; and in 1935, 1.44 per cent.

37. The profits of the oil companies operating in Mexico are considerably higher than those of the United States.

38. In the year 1935 the capital invested in the oil industry in Mexico totalled only 0.73 per cent. of the capital invested in the oil industry in the United States, whereas oil production in Mexico was 4.05 per cent of American production.

39. In 1935, to produce one barrel of petroleum in Mexico it was necessary to make an investment of 8.64 pesos, and in the United States of 48.12 pesos. The investment requirement in Mexico was only 17.96 per cent. of that of the United States.

40. In the last three years (1934-36) the defendant oil companies have earned very large profits; their financial conditions must be characterised as being extraordinarily prosperous; and, consequently, it may be asserted that, without prejudice whatever to their present or future situation, they are in a position to meet the demands of the Union of Oil Workers of the Mexican Republic to the extent of an annual sum of approximately 26 million pesos.

It must be remembered that during the five or six months' sitting of the Commission the companies were given every right to defend themselves, and the final award against the companies to the extent of 26,000,000 pesos yearly only represented 30 per cent. of the demands of the Union.

The companies appealed against the award of the Federal Board of Conciliation and Arbitration and began a campaign of deliberate distortion of the Union demands, with the aims of demonstrating their incapacity to pay and also splitting workers' unity in Mexico. They not only protested their "patriotic" motives, but drew lurid pictures of how, if the award was granted and the companies ruined, 35 years' progress would be sacrificed and Mexico reduced to ox-carts and candles.

After a while they dropped their "patriotic" rôle and commenced a policy of open aggression by—

(1) taking out deposits in Mexican banks with a view to producing an economic crisis and thereby forcing the Tribunal to reverse the award in their favour;

(2) suspending all internal credits and demanding payment of existing

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debits, with a view to provoking an industrial crisis.

I myself thought it was the finish, but our country has a great virtue ; we tightened our belts, paid cash and stood united.

The Supreme Court upheld the award given by the Labour Board, but the companies refused to recognise the verdict, making a mockery of our highest Tribunal. The companies refused to fulfil their obligations, on the grounds that the actual decisions of the Court meant, in effect, an award of some 44,000,000 pesos instead of 26,000,000. President Cardenas, in an effort to avoid expropriation, guaranteed that the award would by no means exceed the stated 26,000,000 pesos, virtually a victory for the companies, but they still refused. They did not believe that the Government would fight for the sovereignty of the country, or that, if it did, it would be backed up by the people.

In view of the companies' refusal to submit to the award, under the Federal Labour law the Oil Workers' Union declared that all relations between employers and workers had ceased and required the companies to pay three months' wages and other grants that local contracts might entail. On the 17th March we went to the companies, not as workers, but as creditors come to collect.

On the afternoon of March 18th, after days of defiance, and in direct contradiction to their repeated statements of inability to pay, the companies' representative called on President Cardenas and offered to pay the disputed 16,000,000 pesos, but yet, not submitting themselves to the articles of the Award but making the spread of that amount according to their opinion themselves. It was too late. On the evening of March 18th, three days after the expiration of the time limit set by the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration for compliance with the decision of December 18th, President Cardenas delivered a radio message to the nation announcing the Government's expropriation of the oil industry and *corresponding indemnization* to the expropriated companies, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 27 of the constitution and 10 and 20 of the Law of Expropriation, *in cash and within a period of not more than ten years.*

With a minimum of dislocation the industry was taken over by a national administration board composed of Government Ministers, Technical Experts and Union representatives, with corresponding local committees.

The position to-day may be summed up as follows. Although we have not yet attained sales to the value of the old productive level, we have been able to raise the salaries of workers in the industry by a total of half a million pesos yearly ; we have not fired a single man, and have already granted and put into effect most of the social amenities stipulated in the award.

In addition, we have painted the service stations throughout the country, repaired pipe lines, many of which were in a terrible condition, built new houses for the workers, and purchased nearly 400 " tank "

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cars for the distribution of gasolene. We have also bought one oil tanker and are hiring others. We have lowered prices in several productions for the benefit of consumers, and although we are handling this industry commercially, it has the fundamental idea of public service.

We have increased domestic sales by 12 per cent., have paid full taxes to the Government and on the 40 per cent. production represented by domestic consumption have been able to render to the Mexican people all the benefits previously represented by 100 per cent. production in the hands of foreign-owned companies.

With regard to recovering the foreign market which formerly represented some 60 per cent. of total production, which is fast being recovered, our position is well known. We have stated many times our desire to sell our products to democratic countries, but they have not so far given us the facilities. The oil companies, particularly in the United States, have waged a very unjust campaign on the groundless assertions that the Mexican Government have robbed them of their properties, and that the expropriation was a " Communist " step. To answer this I only have to tell you one thing, and that is that the expropriation was backed up, not only by the proletariat, but by the majority of industrial concerns, Catholics and members of the " Right," in other words, by the whole nation. It was not a matter of ideology, but a matter of existence, based exclusively on law and the principles of international justice. The companies have tried to make out that our action is a controversy particularly between the Mexican and the American people. The controversy lies between Mexico and a group of millionaires. We say that Mexico deserves the sympathy of all countries in the world because our people are working to create a dignified, progressive country, freed from the many obstacles which other countries have already succeeded in overcoming. There is no reason why Mexico cannot succeed.

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DOCUMENTS

Twenty Years of the Communist International

ON MARCH 2, 1919, the first Congress of the Communist International opened in Moscow. On March 6 it adjourned, having held five sessions at the third of which the formal decision for the establishment of the International was adopted immediately following a report by Lenin submitting his famous theses on "Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." There were present at the Congress fifty-one delegates from thirty countries; of these eighteen were delegates with a consultative voice only, being mainly individuals from Communist groups in various countries who happened to be in Moscow and were provisionally accepted in view of the great difficulties of communication due to the civil war, the intervention, etc.

The manifesto adopted by the Congress at its concluding session is a historic document from which the following extracts, in which crossheads have been inserted, are of great actual interest:

"Seventy-two years ago the Communist Party proclaimed its programme to the world in the shape of a Manifesto drawn up by the greatest exponents of the proletarian revolution, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. . . . The hour of the last decisive battle has come later than the apostles of the social revolution had expected and hoped. Yet it has come. We, the Communists of to-day, representing the revolutionary proletariat of the different countries of Europe, America and Asia, assembled in Soviet Moscow, feel it incumbent upon us to continue and bring to completion the programme proclaimed seventy-two years ago. . . .

SOCIALISM AND WAR

"Now that Europe is one mass of wreckage, a smouldering ruin, the incendiaries most implicated are busily engaged in looking for the originators of the war. They are followed by their henchmen—professors, parliamentary politicians, journalists, social-patriots and other hangers-on of the bourgeoisie.

"For many years past, Socialism had been predicting the inevitability of imperialist war; it perceived the essential cause of this war in the insatiable greed of the propertied classes of the two principal rivals and in general of all capitalist countries. Two years before the explosion, the responsible world leaders of socialism, assembled in congress at Basle, denounced imperialism as the instigator of the coming war and threatened the bourgeoisie with the Socialist revolution—the retaliation of the proletariat for the crimes of militarism. Now, after five years experience, after history has disclosed the covetousness of Germany and has unmasked actions no less criminal on the part of the Allies, the ministerial Socialists of the Entente countries follow in the wake of their governments in declaring the deposed German Kaiser to be the principal war criminal. . . .

BRITAIN'S ROLE

"Up to the very outbreak of war British diplomacy had foreborne to raise its mysterious visor. The Government of the City was afraid that if it categorically announced its intention to cast in its lot with the Entente, the government of Berlin might desist from war. London wanted war. That is why it behaved so as to induce Berlin and Vienna to count upon Britain's neutrality while Paris and Petersburg were sure of its intervention. The war that had been brewing for decades broke out through direct and conscious provocation by Great Britain. The British Government reckoned on giving support to France and Russia only to the extent necessary to exhaust them while also exhausting Germany, Britain's deadly foe. The power of the German military machine, however, proved too formidable to be put down by a mere show of intervention and England had to take part in the war in good earnest. The part of the cynical spectator, which Great Britain traditionally claimed, fell to the lot of the United States. . . .

THE SMALL NATIONS

"As a result of the war the contradictions of the capitalist system have been forcibly brought before mankind in the shape of physical suffering—hunger, cold, epidemics—and in a recrudescence of barbarism. This settles once and for all the academic quarrel

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amongst socialists over the theory of increasing misery and the gradual transition from capitalism to socialism....

"The national State, after having given a powerful impulse to capitalist development, has been outgrown by the development of the productive forces. This has rendered more difficult the position of the small countries surrounded by Great Powers in Europe and the rest of the world. . . . While they wrong and oppress small and weak nations, condemning them to famine and degradation, the Allied imperialists just like the imperialists of the Central Powers before them, do not cease to talk of the right of national self-determination, a right which is now trodden under foot in Europe and throughout the world.

"The proletarian revolution alone is capable of ensuring the small nations a free and independent existence. It will liberate the productive forces of all countries from the restrictions of the national States. It will unite the peoples in the closest economic co-operation based on a common economic plan. It will enable even the smallest and weakest nation to direct its own national culture in absolute freedom and independence without detriment to the united and centralised economy of Europe and of the world. . . .

COMMUNISTS AND DEMOCRACY

"The whole of the bourgeois world accuses the Communists of destroying freedom and political democracy. That is not true. In acceding to power the proletariat merely asserts the utter impossibility of applying the methods of bourgeois democracy and creates the condition and forms of a new and higher democracy, that of the working class. The whole course of capitalist development, particularly in its last imperialist period, had undermined political democracy, not only by dividing the nations into two hostile and irreconcilable classes but also by condemning wide sections of the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat to the same economic stagnation and political impotence as the hapless lower strata of the proletariat itself.

"In those countries where historical development made it possible, the working class has utilised the régime of political democracy to organise itself against capitalism. The same process will go on in all countries where the conditions for a workers' revolution are not yet ripe. But the intermediate strata of the population, not only in the villages, but in the towns, are kept epochs behind historical development by capitalism itself. . . .

CIVIL WAR: THE TRUTH

"The outcry of the bourgeois world against civil war and Red Terror is the most preposterous hypocrisy known to the history of political struggles. There would be no civil war if the cliques of exploiters who have brought mankind to the brink of ruin did not oppose every forward step of the workers, if they did not instigate plots and murders, if they did not call to their aid armed force from abroad to maintain or restore their predatory privileges.

"Civil war is forced upon the working class by its arch-enemies. The working class cannot refrain from returning blow for blow, unless it renounces its own interests and sacrifices its future, which is the future of all humanity. The Communist Parties, never artificially fostering civil war, strive to shorten its duration as much as possible, whenever it inexorably breaks out; they endeavour to reduce to the minimum the number of its victims, and above all to ensure the victory of the proletariat."

Shortly after the Congress Lenin wrote an article entitled "The Third International and its Place in History," in the course of which he said:

"The First International laid the foundation of the proletarian, international struggle for socialism. The Second International marked the epoch in which the soil was prepared for a broad, mass, widespread movement in a number of countries. The Third International gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, purged it of its opportunist, social chauvinist, bourgeois and petty bourgeois dross, and *has begun to effect* the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . .

"The world-historical significance of the Third Communist International lies in that it has begun to put into practice Marx's greatest slogan, the slogan which sums up the century-old development of Socialism and the working-class movement, the slogan which is expressed by the term: dictatorship of the proletariat.

"This brilliant forecast, this brilliant theory is becoming a reality. This Latin phrase has now been translated into the languages of all the peoples of contemporary Europe—more than that, into all the languages of the world.

"A new epoch in world history has begun.

"Mankind is throwing off the last form of slavery: capitalist, or wage slavery.

"Emancipating itself from slavery, mankind is for the first time passing to real liberty."

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BOOK REVIEWS

Britons in Spain

Britons in Spain: the History of the British Battalion of the XVth International Brigade by William Rust. (Lawrence and Wishart Ltd.). 1939, xii—212 pp. 2s.

THERE HAS NEVER been anything in the history of Britain like the International Brigade. In the 19th century struggles for national liberation there were indeed splendid episodes: and what the poet Byron did in Greece is rightly hailed as the starting point of a glorious tradition. But the men of the International Brigade have enlarged that tradition into something much bigger, filled with a greater meaning.

With breathless and concise brevity, this book tells of what they did. It is, as the author says in his introduction, " a history of the British Battalion, of the two thousand British volunteers who have fought and bled on Spanish soil since August, 1936. The killed and missing number five hundred, the wounded over twelve hundred; many are incapacitated for life. Less than eight hundred remained in the ranks when the withdrawal took place. Their story is one of breathless bravery, wonderful comradeship and mighty achievements. Asking for no reward they fought for freedom, democracy and peace. And they accomplished much."

How is the story told? Chapter I., The Beginning of the Brigade, gives the framework of this epic. From the opening paragraphs, written in a manner that rises " to the height of this great argument," the story plunges into a rapid narrative of the Fascist rebellion that was hatched in Rome and Berlin. The idea of the Brigade as a gathering of volunteers, and what manner of men they were who came, is told, and is followed by its characterisation (" no higher form of international solidarity could be asked for or achieved "), by a description of the difficulties they surmounted (special Act of Parliament, the threat of two years imprisonment for volunteering and all the other means by which the National Government sought to reinforce its one-sided " non-intervention " in favour of Franco), of Madrid apparently about to be captured on November 7, and finally of that second week when the cry " They shall not pass " came from a million throats of the people of Madrid. It sums up the historical task of those who, never numbering more than 20,000 as against tenfold as many foreign mercenaries of Franco, came to Spain in the cause of world peace and the advancement of mankind:

> By holding decisive sectors of the front during the early months of the war they gained valuable time, and by the force of their example and methods they have helped the Spanish people to fulfil their destiny. Deserted by the Governments, the Spanish people recognised the International Brigade as the expression of the ardent international solidarity of the peoples, and were inspired to create a new People's Army on the basis of that anti-Fascist unity which the Brigade embodied.

After this framework, the twelve following chapters give in detail the main battles and, sandwiched between, the " side-shows " and daily conditions of the Battalion. The factual detail is enormous: the handling of it must have meant a tremendous labour. The abundant documentation, the catalogue of the deeds of men (scores of them individually named and described), the tale of crucial minutes as well as the broader descriptions, do not come together into any idealised picture, simplified for effect. It is faithful record.

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Some of the merits of this history can be listed as follows:

1. The author was in Spain for eight months as correspondent of the *Daily Worker*, and therefore in close contact with the Battalion and with the daily changes in the political and military situation.
2. He had access to the official documents of the International Brigade.
3. He knows most of the members of the Battalion personally, who have recounted to him their experiences.
4. He has had the collaboration of their families in England, who lent hundreds of letters from their sons or husbands or brothers in the Battalion.

Had these been lacking, the author's grasp of the international situation, his experience as an editor of the *Daily Worker* and his political capacity would have enabled him to write an effective book. But with these added, the book has a special quality. It does not seek to cover the whole international struggle: it is not a history of Spain in these last years; it is not a military history of the Spaniards and their People's Army; it is not a history of the whole International Brigade. It is strictly what it sets out to be, a concise history of the British Battalion; but yet so written as to illuminate all these others with a clear political vision.

Britons in Spain whose proceeds go to the Dependants' Aid Committee of the International Brigade, is not only a book everyone should read. Its contents make it a call to action on behalf of Peace and Democracy. It is in such action that the People of Britain will best show the gratitude expressed on their behalf at the XVth Congress of the Communist Party: "To all those who have gone we say, on behalf of the People of Britain, who will one day come to understand the great and glorious task you have undertaken, 'Thank you, Comrades! We shall not forget your work, and your sacrifice is and shall for all time be a glorious example to us all.'"

P.A.

Understand the Enemy

Fallen Bastions by G. E. R. Gedye. (Gollancz. 16s.).
Britain in Spain by "The Unknown Diplomat." (Hamish Hamilton. 3s. 6d.).
The Shadow of the Swastika by Geoffrey T. Garratt. (Hamish Hamilton. 5s.).

"WHAT IS NEEDED above all else is to understand the enemy. It is the source of all sound politics and generalship." So wrote Julian Bell, one of the most brilliant of those Englishmen of intellect who have given their lives in Spain. To that understanding these books make an important contribution.

Mr. Gedye is one of the half-dozen most eminent English foreign correspondents. His "high qualifications and established reputation" as a journalist have been officially praised in the House of Commons. For the best part of twenty years he has been employed first as special correspondent of *The Times* (both of London and New York) and latterly of the *Daily Telegraph*, in Germany and Central Europe. He is an expert observer of the first class. And his experiences in Austria and Czechoslovakia, which he has here set down in detail, with immense power and skill, have made him a convinced and indefatigable opponent of Fascism and of Fascism's principal aid and comfort—the Chamberlain regime in Britain.

Our pro-Fascist politicians and newspaper directors, eager swallowers of nineteenth-hand tales of anti-clerical "atrocities" in Spain, should be compelled to declare themselves on Mr. Gedye's account of what he himself saw of the "bestial horror" of the Nazi pogrom in Vienna, the street-scrubbing with acid that seared and tortured the hands, the savage beatings,

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the sacrilege in the synagogues. What, too, do these gentlemen think of the revolting contrast between Hitler's solemn disavowal, in July, 1934, of the Nazi murderers of the wretched Dollfuss and the Hitlerite glorification of these same murderers (flags, parades, marble tablets and all) at what Mr. Gedye calls the " Gunmen's Gala " in July 1938 ? Do they approve of the impudent trick by which Hitler justified the German invasion of Austria, claiming that it was in response to a telegraphed appeal from " Chancellor " Seyss-Inquart—when the troops crossed the frontier hours before that Nazi stool-pigeon took office and no such telegram was ever sent ?

These points, however, are by way of illustration. The central thesis which emerges from this book is (1) that the peculiar alliance between the dominant group of German big capitalists and the Nazi " protection " racket is impelled to an always extending policy of plunder in order to obtain the material to patch up the more than ever fundamentally defective capitalist machine—hence the rape of Austria and Sudetenland, hence the *drang nach Osten*, " until the strength has been acquired for the final great plunder expedition—against the wealth of Britain and France "; (2) that this policy can only succeed given the effective functioning of a Fifth Column in the democratic countries, using social and political contacts, influencing press, cinema, radio, developing whispering campaigns " to dissolve the united mass of the enemy people " as Nazi military Professor Banse bluntly put it in a book whose English translation Germany made exceptional efforts to suppress.

Vital in relation to the first point is the question of the relative military strengths of the dictatorships and the democracies. Here Mr. Gedye's own military experience makes his testimony particularly valuable. He gives detailed facts to show that the German invasion of Austria was militarily a complete *débâcle*, transport blocked, tanks ditched, disorganisation and confusion rampant, so that only the entire lack of resistance enabled the Nazi high command to get away with it. The political and technical factors that produced this result have not ceased to operate. On the other hand Czechoslovakia testified to the military strength of the democracies; that has been stressed often enough, but Mr. Gedye hammers it home with new facts. To the massive strength of the Schoeber Line a mobilisation unparalleled in its smooth efficiency brought an infantry more heavily armed for defence than any force of like size in military history, instanced by the equipping of every squad of six riflemen with a light machine gun and 1,600 rounds of machine gun ammunition.

Yet Czechoslovakia's hopes of defeating Nazi aggression lay not in herself alone, Mr. Gedye argues, but in her alliance with the Soviet Union. He is able to outline, from authoritative information, what would have been the probable course of military operations, utterly demolishing the fraudulent Chamberlainite claims that the Czechs would have been " annihilated " and that the democracies had no way of coming to their aid. He reproduces a conversation between President Benes and Alexandrovsky, Soviet Minister in Prague, showing that the U.S.S.R. to the end pledged herself even if France backed out to come to the Czechs' aid " instantly and with all her strength " provided that the Czechs resisted, denounced Germany as aggressor and called for League support. Benes, browbeaten by his own Fifth Column, the reactionary Agrarians, never made that call. In a pungent passage Mr. Gedye disposes of the much-peddled lies about Soviet military " weakness," the supposed effect of the " purge " of conspiring Generals and so forth; what he says is significant too in connection with the conventional claim that rearmament alone provides military strength :

> Napoleon's frequent purges of his army which increased efficiency on every occasion are often overlooked—also the fact that until the French Revolution

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had given Frenchmen something to fight for, the French armies were beaten in every campaign. Their armament was good, their defences were good, their cost enormous—but the readiness of the individual soldier and, the most important person of all, the subaltern section commander, to sacrifice their lives for the cause, had to be created by the liberating French Revolution.

Certainly " Czechoslovakia was a free gift flung at the heads of the General Staffs of the Western democracies." Yet the gift was spurned. Long before Munich the line of capitulation had been agreed on (recollect Chamberlain's American press interview in May, 1938) and there were no scruples in putting it over. Mr. Gedye notes how British policy was influenced by personages like the one—he names no names—who had said to him years before : " We shall never have peace in Europe until Benes and all his friends are in Hell." He tells the whole repulsive story of the British Government's ruthless pressure on the Czechs, seeking at all costs to force them to capitulate to the Hitler-Henlein engineered subversion and aggression. Normal diplomatic procedure and politeness were flung to the winds (" the Chamberlain Government is treating the head of our State as though he were a nigger chieftain ruling some troublesome colonial tribe " said Czech Foreign Office officials). That same spirit animated the Runciman Mission. Indeed from his first arrival in Prague Lord Runciman went out of his way to shower politeness on the Henlein leaders (" granting belligerent rights to our Franco before he has even started the open rebellion," Mr. Gedye heard a Czech newspaperman murmur). The Mission's contacts with the Henleinists were " long and deep "—all the Noble Viscount's week-ends being spent on the estates of Henleinist German aristocrats—those with the Czechoslovak Government " brief and distinctly cool," while the case of the Sudeten democrats was simply ignored. Hence the notorious Report, one of the most tendentious and fantastic public documents on record.

These perfidious methods of our rulers are well worth study; but even more important is the motive for actions that *prima facie* might seem hardly credible. Mr. Gedye indicates that motive as the frenzied desire to preserve Fascism from its own day of reckoning, " for who knows who else in Europe might not strike a blow for liberty if the German masses secured it ! " The same broad calculation, the same bitter hostility to democracy and Socialism, has all along underlain the Chamberlainite support for the Italo-German war of intervention in Spain. That is made clear in the second of the books under review, a richly documented study by an evidently foreign authority which has unfortunately been translated and edited with extreme carelessness. The key to Spain, it is shown, has all along lain in London; without Mr. Chamberlain Mussolini and Hitler could never have got into their hands what they openly proclaim to be a vital *place d'armes* for their next aggression.

The sudden professions of concern for Spanish independence, coupled with cynical speculations on the possibility of detaching Franco from his allies and masters, that are being so much multiplied as these lines are written, find their answer in *Britain in Spain*. On the one hand there is the Italian emphasis on the " peril " of " joint domination " by " British-French capital " to the " effective independence (!!) of Spain " " a less apparent and bloody peril than the conquest and corruption of Bolshevism, but not less grave; and just as we have aided Franco to repulse the latter we are ready to help in combating the first " (*Gazzetta del Popolo*, August 14, 1938). On the other hand there are the repeated Franco statements that Spain is part of the Rome-Berlin Axis; typical is this quotation from the *Correo Espanol*, May 5, 1938 : " whether one likes it or not, the Spanish State must see eye to eye with Italy and Germany. . . . Our reappearance in European affairs will be at the side of Italy and Germany, the only Great Powers whose political interests can join with ours."

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The case of Spain, with special reference to the Chamberlain-Mussolini rapprochement of the past three years, is also discussed at some length by Mr. Garratt; the main purpose of his short but suggestive study is, however, to examine what Mr. E. M. Forster has called the " Fabio-Fascism " of our rulers, to outline the structure and personnel of our own Fifth Column. He suggests that tendencies towards Fascism in this country are to be found far beyond the confines of the Cliveden Set, indicating, for example, our large middle rentier and retired officer stratum, the Catholic and High Church hierarchy and litterateurs, the big financial and landowning interests. The " gradual infiltration of Fascist ideas into a Government of the rich " he sees as the basic danger. He would agree, I imagine, with Mr. Gedye's definition of Chamberlainism as a " pre-Fascist " régime. Yet his analysis appears to lead him to a pessimistic conclusion, while Mr. Gedye emphasises that " there is still time for the overthrow of this pre-Fascist regime before it achieves full totalitarianism—but only just time." Even Mr. Gedye claims, though, that the " clearsightedness, vigour and energy " required are " such as the slogan-drugged masses of Britain have recently shown few signs of possessing." Surely the primary problem is of securing that essential " clearsightedness, vigour and energy," the " drive to immediate action," on the part of the *leaders*: the masses will respond, as they are responding wherever the call to unity and action is being made to them, for instance in the Cripps campaign.

ALLEN HUTT.

Vindicating Marxism

The Marxist Philosophy and the Sciences by J. B. S. Haldane. (Allen and Unwin. 1938. 5s.).

IN THE PREFACE to his Anti-Dühring, Engels pointed to the need to discover the laws of dialectics and their mode of operation in nature, and he remarked that " to do this systematically and in each separate department is a gigantic task." The importance of Professor Haldane's book is indicated by the fact that at last after more than half-a-century a leading scientist in England has taken up this essential task.

Professor Haldane, in his preface, makes the modest claim but ambitious comparison : " I have tried to apply marxism to the scientific problems of my own day, as Engels did over many years, and Lenin in 1908." It does not detract from the value of an outstanding performance if this contribution cannot be put on the level of Engels or Lenin. Haldane himself apologises for the deficiencies which he recognises are inevitable, remarking : " I have only been a marxist for about a year." It is the more to his merit that what he has contributed is as rich and valuable as it is.

Numerous works on Marx and on Marxism have appeared in England during the last few years. There has been a rush to cash in on the boom and all sorts of persons with the slenderest understanding of their subject have hastened to expound publicly their views on Marxism or their version of what Marx intended to say. Haldane's work has nothing in common with this category of books. He has not only made a serious study of marxist theory, he has not only mastered the essentials of the marxist method, but he has been successful in applying this great weapon so as to make a positive contribution to the marxist interpretation of modern scientific knowledge.

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It is important to lay stress on these two characteristics of Professor Haldane, his basic correctness in the understanding of marxism and at the same time his originality of mind necessary for carrying the subject further, for they raise him head and shoulders above all the natural scientists who are now in various degrees approaching the position of dialectical materialism in this country.

In some ways the present book is refreshingly more elementary and more orthodox than might have been expected, especially in view of its academic origin in a series of University lectures. The author does not try to show off by making a new formulation of marxist theory or developing marxist principles as if they were his own invention without referring to Marx or Engels. In his introductory chapter he gives an excellent simple exposition of marxist principles, using freely here and throughout the book apposite citations from Marx, Engels and Lenin, while all the time introducing new examples of their application in scientific fields.

It is impossible not to pay especial tribute to Professor Haldane's capacity as an expositor. His scientific knowledge is profound and he possesses the art of the great scientist of being able to discuss the most difficult subjects in simple language and of being able to use his scientific knowledge to illuminate subjects of immediate social interest.

His quality of originality is no less important than his understanding of marxist theory for undertaking the task involved in this book. His account is by no means a mere repetition of what has already been said by marxists concerning scientific problems; he is above all concerned to review the latest and most controversial scientific problems in the light of marxism.

The book is, of course, only an introduction to the marxist interpretation of science, but it covers a very wide field involving an original treatment of a great variety of subjects. It can be said that it is impossible to read this book without learning something new, whether the reader be an experienced marxist or skilled scientist. The form of treatment by lectures devoted to separate fields is also very suitable for the object the author has in view. After the introductory chapter on marxist principles there are separate chapters devoted to mathematics and cosmology, the quantum theory and chemistry, biology, psychology, and a final rather cursory sketch entitled sociology.

The book brings out very well the great contribution made by Engels in the application of the marxist philosophy to natural science. Apart from a few minor criticisms, Haldane pays a very great tribute to the work of Engels, showing again and again how, in relation to new developments, Engels' basic views have been confirmed by later advances in scientific knowledge.

We have not space here to do justice to the numerous illuminating passages which reveal Haldane's excellent understanding of dialectical principles, but we cannot refrain from giving a few examples of his many good formulations. For instance, he points out that many of the contradictions in matter which were paradoxical to Plato now seem to us trivial but that, as in regard to the properties of electrons, we are faced with new contradictions, and he adds

> two thousand years from now these difficulties may seem very elementary indeed, but I think that our descendants will probably still be finding opposites embodied in matter which they will find difficult to unify.

His chapter on biology is especially rich in opening up fresh lines of thought. He gives an interesting examination of modern knowledge of the theory of evolution in the light of dialectical principles and concludes by saying:

> I believe that the theory of evolution is likely to develop on these dialectical lines on a basis of Darwinism, but transcending the rather crude Darwinism

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> which is still used to justify unrestricted competition, and which, like unrestricted competition, is really a thing of the past.

While Haldane's method of treatment by the application of dialectical principles to the present state of scientific knowledge has great advantages from the point-of-view of simple exposition, it embodies certain fundamental disadvantages. One of these, though not the most important, is the danger of making it appear that marxist principles are a set of rules which can be applied mechanically to any assembly of facts. Haldane expressly guards himself against such a criticism. He says that the presentation of dialectics as a set of principles lays itself open to the severe criticism that thereby

> the dialectic, which is a unity, appears as a collection of rules of thumb, one of which should be applied wherever possible. Such a point-of-view would, I am sure, be dispelled by a reading of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

The main disadvantage applying to his method is that the stress laid on providing information of the latest results of scientific research involves neglecting the historical developments of the subject which is essential for a dialectical study. Haldane is quite aware of the importance of considering natural processes and natural knowledge in their historical aspect. He himself points out that

> while verbal or argumentative dialectical process can take us a certain way, can clarify our ideas to a considerable extent, yet history applies a dialectical process of a far more searching character to our social institutions, bringing out contradictions which no amount of mere argument would have disclosed.

This applies to much more than social institutions.

The progress of scientific knowledge compels the acceptance of a dialectic view of nature, as Engels did so much to point out. The history of science shows the progress from a world outlook based on a view of nature as unchanging, subject only to mechanical quantitative laws, and with human society and its history a thing apart, to a view in which the world is comprehended as a complex of processes in which everything is in ceaseless change, in which specific forms of motion must be distinguished and in which the same basic principles of dialectic change are found to apply to nature, to man, and to the process of thought.

This brings up another point which it is impossible to omit when considering the relation of marxist philosophy to science. Engels' work in particular showed how already in his time the fundamental character of dialectical thought was forcing its way through unconsciously in the minds of natural scientists and he pointed out that for scientific advance, for eliminating the confusion and blundering that marks the theoretical thought of the majority of natural scientists, it was necessary that the transition from the metaphysical to the dialectical approach should be made consciously by natural scientists. Nevertheless even to-day the dialectical view of nature, society and thought has not found recognition among scientists, and the standpoint of Professor Haldane gains special pre-eminence because of its isolated, pioneering character.

Why is it that scientists as a whole are not dialectical materialists? There is a basic marxist reason, viz., that the contemporary social structure is the material foundation determining the general character of the ideology, including the theoretical thought and philosophy, of a given society. Marxism, the philosophy of dialectical materialism, is not ignored and condemned because it is obsolete or disproved, but because it involves a revolutionary outlook incompatible with the prevailing ideology of capitalist society. Haldane alludes to this when he remarks that even a citation of examples of British scientists who are already making use of the principles of dialectical materialism "might endanger the posts and salaries of the workers concerned." He could also claim that this subject does not really enter into the scope of his book. Nevertheless, it has played an important part in the

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history of science and it demands close attention in any analysis of the state of scientific knowledge to-day, because the defects due to an outlook based on mechanical materialism or idealism have not diminished but have developed to such a degree as to amount to a veritable " crisis of natural science," as analysed by Lenin, while under Fascism scientific thought is subject to unexampled degradation.

Where there is so much to admire in Haldane's writing, it would be ungenerous to insist on minor criticisms. It should be mentioned, however, that the book contains several passages which cause irritation as a result of inaccurate or hasty writing. Take, for instance, some of the statements on the State in the last chapter. Haldane says :

> Marx agreed to a surprising extent with the extreme nineteenth century liberals and with philosophers like Herbert Spencer, when he characterised the State as a " parasitic excrescence " to be " amputated ". . . . He wanted to abolish what he regarded as the overgrown State of his own time. (pp. 172-3).

It is certainly incorrect to say that Marx wanted to abolish the State, and especially to say that he wanted to abolish " the State of his own time " or because it was " overgrown," nor is there anything in common between Marx's view of the State and that of the nineteenth century liberals.

The following are a few examples of hasty formulation. Haldane says " Engels was a very thorough-going materialist in some ways " (p. 93). Why only in some ways ? " Darwin took variation for granted and thought that all variations were inheritable. This was largely due to Cobden and the repeal of the Corn Laws " (p. 107). This connection is unexplained and certainly not self-evident. " If a one to one correspondence can be made between the members of two classes, say the bright stars in the Plough and the petals of a typical Purple Loosestrife flower, these two classes are members of a class which also includes the class of days in the week and the class of dwarfs who befriended Snow White. This super-class is the number seven " (p. 43). This sentence has a popular look, but is unintelligible to the ordinary man. Besides, as far as I remember, the Purple Loosestrife has not usually seven petals. " Marxists believe that the principle of economic determinism of other human activities is largely true, but they are out to make it untrue by founding a society in which economic classes have been abolished " (p. 39-40). If by the principle of economic determinism is meant the doctrine of historical materialism enunciated so brilliantly by Marx in the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, then this principle will undoubtedly hold good in classless society also.

Some of Haldane's criticisms of Engels seem hardly justified. He quotes Engels on the development of Graeco-Roman society, and adds the comment " this passage is, of course, somewhat out-of-date " (p. 168). In regard to the period described, Engels' description retains all its value. Haldane declares that Engels " toyed with the idea. . . .that there was in fact no history of the universe as a whole " (p. 68). In view of his emphasis on historical development, the charge would hardly have been admitted by Engels, even in regard to cyclic repetition. Again, Haldane says that Engels adopted the Lamarckian point-of-view to a considerable extent, leading him to " rather curious social consequences " (p. 117). In both cases, Haldane excuses Engels on the ground that he was obviously dissatisfied with his conclusions as he did not publish the manuscript in which they occur (*Dialectics of Nature*). As a matter of fact, Engels himself explains in his preface to the second edition of *Anti-Dühring* that it was the need to work on the second and third volumes of *Capital* that prevented him bringing out the work in question.

It will be obvious that these minor criticisms do not in any way affect the substantial value of Haldane's book. Professor Haldane has produced the best existing introduction to the Marxist study of modern science. His

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breadth and fertility of mind, his gift for research and exposition, will undoubtedly enable him to develop and deepen his important contributions to Marxist philosophy.

CLEMENS DUTT.

Labour's Land Policy

A Policy for British Agriculture by Lord Addison. (Victor Gollancz Ltd. 7s. 6d.).

LORD ADDISON'S *A Policy for British Agriculture* could not have been published at a more opportune time. Agriculture has been right in the news lately. Public attention has been focused on it; and there is a widespread feeling, in the towns as well as in the countryside, that something should be done to rescue agriculture from the plight into which it has been allowed to fall.

During the autumn and winter a mass movement of farmers has been developing, and these traditional supporters of the Tory Party got the Government on the run. The Minister of Agriculture was dismissed, and one of the farmers' own leaders, Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, was installed in his place. The Government was forced to make promises to do something to help farming.

At the same time significant advances have been made by the agricultural workers, especially in securing the application in several counties of the important principle of holidays with pay.

We do not, however, believe that the National Government is going to take measures which will really satisfy the demands and aspirations of the working people of the land, both farmers and wage-workers. Therefore it is more urgent than ever that the Labour Movement should come forward as the leadership of the country people, with a clear policy and clear demands. Lord Addison's book must be evaluated as a contribution to that leadership.

In the first part of his book, Addison deals with the present condition of the countryside. He shows how farming is in decline, and how land is deteriorating and going to waste. He presents a vivid picture of the terrible poverty and bad living conditions of the farm workers, and the difficulties of the average farmer. He explains how the farmers are cheated out of a decent price for their produce.

Some of the examples given are very striking, and in themselves constitute a terrible indictment of the present organisation of agriculture and the policy of the Government. The case of the Beef Subsidy, for instance. In 1934, the Government granted a subsidy of 5s. per cwt. for good quality beef, and for the seven weeks prior to the subsidy the average price was 40s. 3d. per cwt. The moment the subsidy came into operation, the dealers got together, and the price fell to 35s. 7d. per cwt. Thus of the 5s. subsidy the farmers got 4d., the remaining 4s. 8d. of public money was pocketed by the dealers.

This case is typical. All the time the National Government has been helping and increasing the exploitation of agriculture by dealers, manufacturers and monopolies.

Addison also has a good deal to say about the system of private ownership of the land. In the old days the function of the landowner was to provide the capital necessary to keep the land, buildings and equipment in good condition, while the tenant farmer farmed it. The landowners have ceased to fulfil

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this function; land, buildings and equipment are deteriorating, and the industry is starved of capital. A number of farmers have bought their own land, but the majority of these owner-occupiers are crushed by mortgages, and cannot afford to make the improvements that are needed.

On the basis of these facts Addison builds up his case for nationalisation of the land. His book contains a remarkably clear and painstaking exposition of exactly what the Labour Party proposals for nationalisation of the land involve.

Addison makes the nationalisation of the land the corner-stone of the whole edifice of agricultural policy. He then goes on to advance detail proposals for rationalised marketing organisation, price control and guaranteed prices, and control of imports. But in this connection it seems that he overlooks a fundamental factor which is responsible for the present condition of agriculture, namely, the growth of monopoly. Big monopoly interests—such as the Millers' Association, the United Dairies, Imperial Chemicals (which supplies fertilisers), the Sugar Beet Corporation—are more and more obtaining a stranglehold over agriculture. Addison works out how to deal with rings of dealers, how to eliminate redundant middlemen and distributors—but he does not work out how to tackle the monopolies. Indeed, he seems rather to wish to encourage monopolies, at the expense of the smaller fry, and expects such combines as Imperial Chemicals and United Dairies to play a " progressive " and " enlightened " rôle in co-operating to secure a better organisation of supplies in the interests of both producers and the consuming public.

The contrary would be more likely to be the case. The big combines will always do their best to keep down prices to the producers, and to keep up prices to the consumers. Our policy must essentially be a policy of struggle against them.

Consequently, although it is packed with facts and figures and practical examples, Addison's book and his policy has in this respect a rather utopian character. It advances long-term proposals, based on nationalisation of the land, for making agriculture prosperous within the framework of monopoly capitalism. But such prosperity can only be obtained through a determined struggle against the monopolies—through advancing and carrying out measures to restrict and limit their activities.

The stress laid on nationalisation of the land itself reflects this fundamental weakness of Addison's policy. We need not dispute the desirability of nationalisation of the land as a long-term policy. But what should be put in the forefront is rather immediate measures for raising the standard of life of the workers, for guaranteeing prices and controlling imports, for setting up marketing organisations with the right personnel and with power to restrict and control the activities of the monopolies and of the hosts of middlemen and dealers. These are the questions which reflect the immediate needs and desires of the working people of the countryside, in the struggle against the big interests which are responsible for the decline of agriculture; and therefore it is primarily around these questions that unity of the people can be built up, which will be able to transform a policy into actual reality.

Hence while there is a tremendous amount of valuable material, and many very practical proposals, in Addison's book, and while it contains a brilliant commentary on the official policy of the Labour Party, it still falls short of what is required to-day, namely, a policy of the struggle of the country people against the monopolies, a policy which will be able to unite the country people.

MAURICE CORNFORTH.

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The Unconquerable Living

China Fights Back, by Agnes Smedley. (Victor Gollancz Ltd. 7s. 6d.)

THIS IS A series of fascinating sketches of one of the Chinese armies in the early days of the war. Its pictures are graphic and clear. They bring out the spirit of the troops, their heroism under the most trying circumstances, the tremendous handicap of their lack of equipment and medical supplies and give a tiny fragment of the story of China's awakening. Some little points well illustrate the difficulties of the many Chinese who are endeavouring and succeeding in building a modern democratic China—the old peasant and his sons on the way from Yenan to Sian who could not understand a word the Yenan Chinese were saying, the language was so different—and Agnes Smedley trying to explain what a germ is. The army she describes is the 8th Route Army, seasoned, experienced, well led and with a fine moral, a truly model army, drawn from all over China and able to teach the other Chinese armies how the war against Japan must be fought, for the 8th Route Army knows the value of positional as well as guerrilla warfare.

It would be false, however, to read it and think only of the 8th Route Army. Its methods of training, of fighting, of propaganda and of medical work are examples of a stage of efficiency which many other Chinese armies are beginning to attain. But the war against Japan is a national war and this spirit and courage and determination to be efficient is found all over China in some degree ; it animates the People's Political Council, the new armies, the Chinese Medical Red Cross Relief Commission led by Dr. Lim, the movement for education among the people, the movement for building new industries and founding industrial co-operatives. It is a movement which is already weeding out the dead wood of the past, like Wang Ching-Wei and making the mistakes of the early days of the war impossible. The slogan of China is resistance and reconstruction. Agnes Smedley describes chiefly the resistance but when reading this book we must remember that the war is being waged not just by armies like the 8th and New 4th Route Armies, but by the whole Chinese people.

Remembering this, her book is an encouragement: it sends one back fresh and determined to one's own work. When we have read it we realise again, and more fully, the purpose of our struggle and we understand why the Chinese have met with courage and are turning to their own advantage the advances made by the Japanese army since Agnes Smedley wrote, and we understand the spirit which animates the reorganised Chinese provincial governments in the territories behind the Japanese lines. We know, if we did not know before, why Japan will be defeated and the urgency of loans to China and the boycott of Japanese goods.

HUGH DUCKERING.

Co-operative Story

New History of the C.W.S. by Percy Redfern. (Dent & C.W.S. 7s. 6d.)

THE REVISED HISTORY of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, so painstakingly written by Percy Redfern, is beyond doubt the most detailed historical record of the day-to-day progress and development of any section of

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the Co-operative Movement so far published. It is evident that Mr. Redfern has spared no effort to obtain detailed accounts of each step in that advance.

Records and documentary evidence of co-operative efforts existing away back as far as 1760 have been obtained ; in actual fact a whole hundred years before the C.W.S. itself came into existence.

The story opens with an account of six private bakers of those dark and difficult days, who swore affadavits that they were not responsible for the burning of the Shipwrights' Co-operative Mill at Woolwich. A further account of a similar incident at Chatham is given—facts which have apparently come to light for the first time.

The story of the Co-operative Mills at Hull and Devonport—now well known in co-operative history—is dealt with, plus a record of the first form of co-operative society, which was created at Lennoxtown, Scotland, in 1812, complete with dividend on purchases.

The actual story of the C.W.S. itself commences in the year 1860, when 50 delegates from the retail societies then in existence attended a meeting under a railway arch somewhere in Manchester on Xmas Day. Amid extreme inconvenience—the arch had a wooden floor, the tea was smoky, and outside there was thirteen degrees of frost !—the assembled delegates chatted over the possibilities of a wholesale society.

We learn that their wishes were not fulfilled for another three years, when, in 1863, the C.W.S. as such came into being. Even then, those early days were precarious ones indeed. Whilst the retail societies saw the need for a " Wholesale," they were unable to break away from local contracts ; added to which the transport problem made an almost unscaleable barrier. The early efforts to break into the banking world make interesting reading. Some thousands of pounds were loaned to organisations which proved to be really competitors of the co-operatives, and by the year 1881 the C.W.S. was " in very bad straits."

However, by 1884, when the " Coming of Age " was celebrated, a new era was reached, and from then on the C.W.S. never looked back. The story of the progress made, the ventures in overseas trade and so on, makes interesting reading.

The chapters dealing with the war period are interesting also, in that we see how the C.W.S. set itself the task of helping the Government by supplying clothing, and making suggestions on food rationing, on the basis of its own facts and figures. Because of its good organisation it was the only body able to do this. The answer of the Government, however, was to rebuff the C.W.S., penalise it and ignore it generally.

How much more can I single out for comment ? The book is full of facts of historic value to the working class. Take the chapter dealing with the help given to the Irish workers in the year 1913. The loading of the ships by British voluntary labour, the appreciation of the Irish workers in their turn when the ships arrived ; all records of help of which Co-operation can really be proud.

Students of working-class history will be especially interested in the chapters of the General Strike period. The C.W.S. found itself in a muddle indeed during those hectic days of working-class revolt. Should the co-operative workers participate in the Strike or not ? Some worked, some didn't, and the T.U.C. was unable to say exactly where the Movement should stand. Methinks there will be less confusion on another occasion !

The account dealing with the early days of the Soviet Union and the help given by the C.W.S.—no, I had better not continue. Look it up for yourself.

A word of criticism. In all the story the accounts read well, but such accounts are given as events, without any attempt to show the class character

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of the struggle. After all, here we have a section of the working-class movement endeavouring to bring about organisation of production and distribution in a world of capitalist anarchy. Every step taken must have been met—and, of course is still met—with ruthless opposition on the part of private enterprise, and, for that matter, the whole of the capitalist apparatus.

It will not do to state that Co-operation " arose naturally." On the contrary, the whole book is full of incidents which indicate that every step gained had to be fought for in this section of the working-class movement as in the others.

All the same, a good book. The price steep for our pockets. Still, we can get it into the libraries pending a cheaper edition. ESTHER HENROTTE.

SHORTER NOTICE

Which Way To-morrow? by Noreen Blyth. (Chapman and Hall. 5s.).

THOUGHTFUL AND PRAISEWORTHY analysis of capitalism and the menace of Fascism, with a restatement of the case for Socialism, by a writer who combines a training in psychology with a Conservative and governing class tradition. Noticeable is the clear grip of Socialist reality, as manifest in the Soviet Union, and the reasoned rebuke to " pseudo-intellectual non-socialists " who " adopt an air of fastidious superiority to concrete political problems." The book should be of special value for propaganda among intelligent traditionalists.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Pasionaria—Speeches and Articles, 1936-38. (Lawrence & Wishart.) 2s. 6d. 263 pp.

Metropolitan Man. Robert Sinclair. (Allen & Unwin.) Cheap Edition, 3s. 6d. 365 pp.

British Trade Unionism To-day. G. D. H. Cole and Others. (Victor Gollancz Ltd.) 7s. 6d. 592 pp.

The Industrial Worker in India. B. Shiva Rao. (Allen & Unwin.) 10s. 6d. 263 pp.

The Lessing Legend. Franz Mehring. (Critics Group, New York.) 25 cents. 63 pp.

Soviet Policy and Its Critics. J. R. Campbell. (Victor Gollancz Ltd.) 8s. 6d. 381 pp.

The People's Schools. M. Morris. (Victor Gollancz Ltd.) 1s. 6d. 96 pp.

To-morrow in the Making. Edited by John N. Andrews and Carl A. Marsden. (McGraw-Hill.) 12s. 6d. 471 pp.

Education To-day and To-morrow. W. H. Auden and T. C. Worsley. (Hogarth Press.) 1s. 6d. 51 pp.

La Naissance de l'Armée Nationale, 1789-1794. Jules Leverrier. (Editions Sociales Internationales.) 199 pp.

Henri Heine. Edmond Vermeil. (Editions Sociales Internationales.) 281 pp.

A History of Europe. Henri Pirenne. (Allen & Unwin.) 21s. 624 pp.

The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe. M. Oakeshott. (Cambridge University Press.) 10s. 6d. 224 pp.

Against Aggression. Maxim Litvinov. (Lawrence & Wishart.) 5s. Library Edition, 2s. (paper). 208 pp.

The Founding of the First International. (Lawrence & Wishart.) 1s. 96 pp.

New Data for Lenin's Imperialism. Edited by E. Varga and L. Mendelsohn. (Lawrence & Wishart.) 6s. 322 pp.

History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow.) 1s. 6d. 363 pp.

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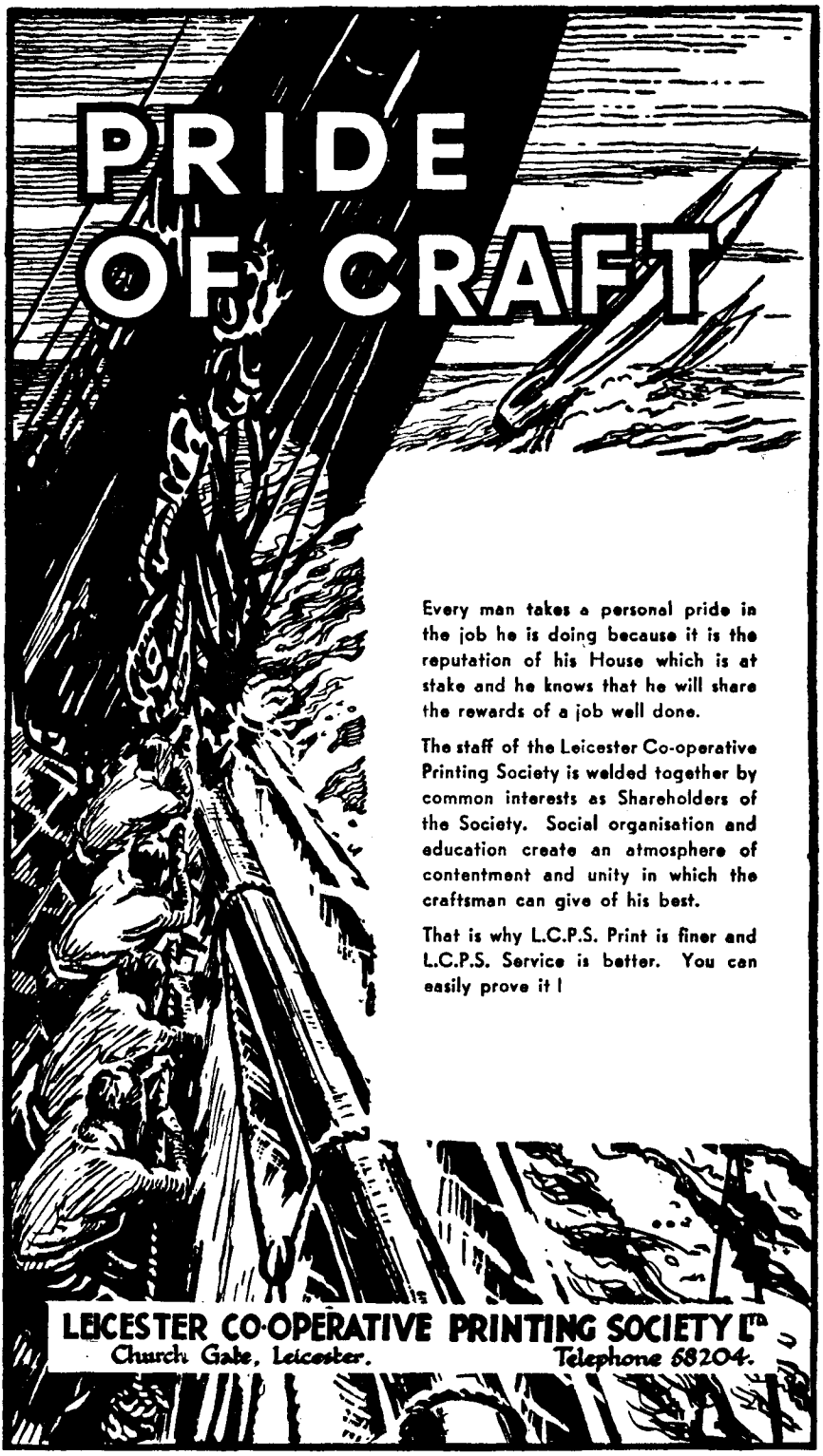
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